

ADVENTURE PROBE

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EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

ADVENTURE PROBE

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LETTERS

If you write in it will be assumed that the letter is for publication in Probe unless it is clearly marked **NOT FOR PUBLICATION**, or obviously just a covering note for your subscription, contribution etc. If an interesting point is raised, and you probably didn't intend it to be published, I will always seek your permission before publishing.

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Copies can be ordered monthly or in multiples up to 12 issues: sorry no discount for quantity. Prices per issue: UK £2.00, Europe & Eire £2.50, Rest of World (Surface) £2.50 (Airmail) £3.00. All payments in pounds sterling please. Cheques/Crossed Postal Orders or International Giro payable to **ADVENTURE PROBE**. Please do **not** send cash.

BACK ISSUES

All back issues are available, at the above prices. Volume 1 comprises 19 issues (June 1986 - Dec 1987), subsequent volumes are 12 issues Jan - Dec.

ADVERTISING RATES

Short, private advertisements in the In-Touch section are free to subscribers. Trade prices are: **FULL PAGE £5.00, HALF PAGE £3.00** but one page per issue **free** (subject to available space) for regular subscribers i.e. 3 issues or more in advance.

DISTRIBUTION

Adventure Probe is distributed during the first week of the month (but will be a little erratic until I get back on schedule). Copy date for contributions and advertisements is 14th of the previous month.

CONTRIBUTIONS

All contributions are gratefully accepted. Please keep me well supplied with computer and adventure-related material. It doesn't matter how brief the entry is. It may be the very information someone has been waiting for. It will be **very** helpful if items for different **sections** are on separate pieces of paper. It doesn't have to be printed or typed but best handwriting will be appreciated, as I am not familiar with every detail. When you submit an entry for the **IN-TOUCH** section please mark which are adventures, utilities, arcades, etc.

POSTAL ADDRESS

Please send all correspondence, subscriptions, etc. to:-

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HALL OF FAME

Many thanks to the following readers who have sent in contributions since the last issue :

Dorothy Millard, Karen Tyers, Jenny Perry, Vicky Jackson, Marion King, Debby Howard,
Dennis Francombe, Sharon Harwood, Peter Clark, Mary Scott-Parker, Hilary Walton,
Joan Williams, Harold Dixon, Sadrik, Keith Burnard, Laurence Creighton,
Ellen Mahon, Damian Steele, Ingrid Solberg, Diane Rice, Richard Batey,
Roger Dowdall, Wynne Snowdon, George Hoyle & Nancy Finnighan

Special thanks to:

Visualize Software for a copy of **ZZZ**.

and to Geoff Lynas for his usual great printing job

The choice of cover picture is also in its hands so it will be as much
of a surprise to me as to you

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the November issue of Probe. First: an apology to Ian Osborne for something I wrote in my review of Sam's Un-excellent Adventure! If I'd read the leaflet first I'd have known it was set in the offices of Sam Coupe (SAMCO) and not those of Crash magazine. Sorry about that, Ian.

Also an apology to Gareth because the promised review of his adventure Search for the Nether Regions is not in this issue. I haven't finished playing the game yet, and I thought a brief review based on what I have seen so far wouldn't do justice to a game, which I'm enjoying immensely. Some of his awful puns are there, but he seems to have grown-up a bit since Microfar Madness, and I had a feeling (confirmed by Vicky Jackson) that part two is tougher going than part one.

I have squeezed as much as I can into the magazine, and there should be something for everyone.

There are four very different reports on the Adventurers' Convention, and a list of the awards. My thanks to the reporters, who don't seem to have missed a thing, and congratulations to the winners of the awards, all very well deserved. My thanks to all those readers who voted for me, I'm really only doing my "job" but I appreciate the gesture.

We have reached the "final" episode of SOMA, but it is open-ended, leaving the way for a new story to begin. I am planning to publish all 14 episodes in a booklet sometime next year, if anyone is interested. For those who are mystified about SOMA, it stands for Story Of Many Authors, and the idea is for each episode to be written by a different reader, with no one knowing quite what will happen next. I know many of you love writing stories, so does anyone wish to begin a new one in the new year?

Also in the magazine is the next part of Steve's AMOS tutorial, and some very useful and sensible playing tips from Keith Bumard. Keep your letters and reviews coming in, and if you can send a few hints or solutions for games you have played, I will be most grateful.

The Amiga is in intermittent use because I need the monitor when I answer correspondence and work on the magazine, but Imbrium is intriguing me, and when I sneaked a quick go at it the other day I solved the problem of how to cross the bridge, then got caught and slung into a dungeon. Getting out of the cell and getting rid of the dragon was easy, but rescuing the upside-down Wizard is proving a real sticky problem. Playing it on a TV isn't ideal because it is easy to miss something that doesn't show up clearly, but I hope to have another go soon - more news next month, maybe.

I would like to send my sincere thanks to Jean Child, Jo Wood, Margaret Crewdson, Wynne Snowden and Geoff Lynas who have responded so magnificently to my pleas for tourist information. As I have no doubt already mentioned, my daughter is taking Travel, Leisure and Tourism courses at college, and she (we) need the sort of leaflets that are available from the various tourist boards throughout the country, and abroad. If anyone out there finds themselves passing such a shop and they feel like going in and grabbing a few free leaflets, they will get my undying gratitude.

Lastly, do not forget to return your 100th issue Monster Quiz answers. So far I only have 5, and I know many more of you are attempting to answer as many as possible. Happy adventuring.

Barbara A.F.I.O.Hon. Member

LETTERS

From Marion King of Southend-on-Sea

Having just acquired a printer for the family's Commodore 64, I have been re-reading my magazine with renewed interest and of course read the article about printers in last month's Probe by Lon Houston. This has spurred me to put pen to paper, or at least fingers to keyboard, to tell you of my experiences. I hope you find it interesting.

In the beginning my son wished and wished for a computer. We did not want to buy just a games machine and not having a lot of money to spare decided to purchase a Commodore 64. We thought it was a truly wondrous machine and I discovered I was quite fascinated by trying to program the thing and although games were played on it we also had great fun making it print our names and anything else we could think of. Unfortunately, we decided to buy this computer at the time when everyone else was either buying Sega or Nintendo consoles or Amigas. Games were difficult to get hold of and utilities were well nigh impossible to purchase. Fortunately, adventure games seemed to actually be on the increase so we had a good supply of these.

About a year after purchasing the computer I managed to buy, from a computer shop, their display 1541 disc drive. This brought a new lease of life to our beloved computer, no more waiting for games to either load or not depending on what mood the Datacassette was in at the time. With the aid of an Action Replay Cartridge I transferred my adventure games onto disc and I was in seventh heaven. The disc drive also opened up the world of public domain.

I have now managed to buy second hand, again from a computer shop, a printer. We thought life would change dramatically for our dear computer again but oh dear no.

You see the problem is I have bought a Commodore MCS 801. Yes I have printed that correctly, it is an MCS 801. The first problem encountered has been it is virtually impossible to get ribbons for it but after much phoning around I did manage to buy one. Through Public Domain I purchased the first disc of an inexpensive desk top publishing system, loaded it up, selected some beautiful graphics and waited to admire the finished result and accept the acclaim of the family. No such luck. Yes, you've guessed it, the printer is an MCS not MPS 801. I spoke to a very nice man at Datel Electronics, he tried to conceal the chuckle in his voice as he told me that he doubted if our printer was compatible with any graphic package.

I decided to admit defeat and get back to some adventuring when I suddenly decided I would write to Probe and tell everyone about my poor obsolete printer, unless you know better?!

★

When Marion first wrote to me about her printer it was in a short letter which I was going to publish in the Help Wanted section. Then a few days later I received her more detailed letter, which I thought deserved full coverage in the letters section.

All Commodore supplies are difficult to find, and I can't help Marion, but I hope someone out there can. (Barbare)

From Richard Batey of Pontypool

Sorry I have not sent in my subscription until now and I appreciate you sending the latest issue of Probe anyway. Time sure does fly.

It was nice talking to you a while ago on a Sunday when I asked for help on a couple of PC adventures. Though you could not help me the point you raised was taken on board. You can only help people if you receive contributions from other readers, the more contributions, the more you can help. You politely suggested that I should send something to Probe so suitably chastised (in a friendly way!) that is just what I have done. Enclosed is a list of ten of my favourite adventures with a small write-up and a bit of help on some of them. A nasty thought occurred to me while compiling this list, I played my first adventure over ten years ago. As I said, time sure does fly.

Another interesting point you brought up was that most people stop playing adventures throughout the summer months. Why this should be so is a mystery to me. I tend to play adventures in the summer because from September onwards I attend college on day release from work (with projects and assignments to complete during the evenings) and play a lot of chess from various clubs. The summer months tend to be the quiet ones for me and this year I have managed to complete six adventures including two by Infocom. Am I the only one beavering away on adventures during the summer?

One thing I would be interested in is how many adventures do people play at any one time? I have a simple rule which I abide by in that I never have more than five adventures on the go at any one time. I do not start another until one of the five is solved which means that if I am stuck on the majority of them I tend to put them aside until I can get some help or inspiration strikes (usually the former.) I am currently stuck on four of the adventures (see Help Wanted) while I have had to drop Ultima 5 as I believe it to be bugged (again see Help Wanted). So apart from Beyond the Titanic I am at a complete stop and have been for a few weeks with no sign of progression. Any help will be gratefully received. If other people have the same problem do they just put the game away and start another one or will they persist like me to the bitter end?

Please find also a cheque for a missing Adventure Probe magazine (Vol. 7 Number 9, September 1993). I know I had the complete set but it seems I have mislaid this one issue. Annoying. I would also like to buy issues 1 to 3 in the A5 format. I have them in A4 but I have recently bought A5 "cordex" magazine binders for all my Probes. They are quite good and I can recommend them to other readers. Vary nice they look too. You can buy them from:

Modern Binders Ltd. Pringle Street, Blackburn, Lancs. BB1 1SA

Tel: 0254 59371

They cost £4 each (many sizes) and £4 p&p for 3 or more binders.

You can send them with the next issue if it will be easier for you. You will notice that the cheque is for £20 rather than £18. Well, I thought that you could send a copy of the next issue to an old subscriber to see if they will re-subscribe. I know that you did this before but that was at your expense so consider this as my little bit of help in promoting Probe. Speaking of which, if you could send me a small leaflet advertising Probe I will stick it on the office notice board.

I have waffled on for long enough now so all that remains is to say keep up the good work. It is much appreciated.

P.S. Just a quick afterthought. Have you tried to get a bit of exposure by sending the 100th issue to various magazines? It might be worth a try maybe you could get a few lines in the news section.

*

Many thanks for such a wonderful set of contributions, Richard, they will be published during the next few issues. I can't really complain (but I do, I know!) about the lack of contributions. Some readers don't like to send in hints but love to write letters and articles (very acceptable ones, I might add), and others feel they are not sufficiently experienced to offer help with adventures, which is nonsense because if you know how to solve ONE puzzle you can offer ONE hint!

There are probably more reasons than I can think of why some computers are neglected during the summer - more daylight hours for outdoor activities, annual holidays and my own excuse, school (now college) holidays, etc. Readers comments, please about this and Richard's question about how many games readers play at any one time.

The back issues and small notice should be with you by now. My own magazines are on a shelf in my "office", but I know, because they've told me so, that some readers have them scattered around the house (an adventure in itself to find a particular issue) or loose in a drawer. Binders sounds like a good idea - 102 issues is a lot of magazines.

It is a very generous gesture to pay for a copy of Probe to be sent to a former subscriber. I have already sent the next issue free to most of them when they didn't resubscribe, and also to other promising new leads. If anyone knows someone who they think will appreciate a copy, please let me know, together with a current address, and I will be more than happy to send a copy with Richard's compliments. (Barbara)

From Dorothy Millard of Croydon, Australia

I must admit to never having entered a quiz before, my excuse being that because I am so far away in Australia it isn't possible to complete and mail the quiz in the time available because of the postal delays. This excuse has been blown apart by Barbara sending me the latest 100th Issue Monster Prize Quiz early. Oh well, with no excuse and considering all the trouble Barbara went to ensure I had every opportunity, I decided that perhaps I had better have a go at completing the quiz.

Not being terribly good at this sort of thing I only managed to answer half a dozen questions initially, but then I started going through the last two years' editions of Probe, and what a wonderful time I had re-reading reviews and articles. In fact I was so engrossed that I didn't get to bed until 2.00 am. It is most unlikely that I will win anything, especially as I must confess to guessing the Infocom questions, but at least I managed to answer two thirds of the questions and the enjoyment of reading back issues of Probe made it all worth while.

*

I also find myself re-reading bits of back issues when I'm looking for something in particular. Perhaps now is a good time to mention that back issues are available - if they're not in stock Geoff will do his best to print a copy as soon as possible. I think I have given everyone plenty of time to attempt the quiz. I have received only a few entries so far, so after all that hard work, don't forget to post it! (Barbara)

From Roger Dowdall of South Ockenden

After reading the October editorial in which you stated you now own an Amiga 600, it made me think back to when I first bought mine and also the problems that accompanied it. The main problem was in getting 1Mb games to run correctly. For some reason they were sluggish or even failed to load.

So I paid a visit to the computer store, where the staff were very helpful. They explained that although the machine has 1Mb of ram it does not necessarily mean it has that amount of ram available for game playing as the hard drive, card slot, internal and external disk drives etc. reduces the availability of ram. The solution was to buy a ram expansion.

I later found the answer to the above problem in a magazine which I was looking through in W.H. Smiths. The article criticized Commodore for not including it in its manuals. The article in question is the Boot Menu and it works like this:- Switch computer on (or reset) and immediately hold down the left and right mouse buttons, a menu will appear on screen relating to the various partitions connected i.e. disk drives, etc. At the bottom of the screen is a button labelled "advanced options", click on this and another screen appears. Using the buttons under the heading "status" you can enable or disable the internal/external drives. Say, for example, you wished to play a game from disk, you would then disable everything except DF0. Now click on "use" and you are returned to the Boot Menu screen but this time the DF0 partition remains. With your disk in the drive click on DF0 and the disk will load.

By using the Boot Menu and disabling partitions not required has the effect of freeing more ram, allowing a 1Mb game to run properly. Note once a partition has been disabled it remains so until the computer has been reset.

The above item is based on an Amiga 600 so I don't know if it relates to all Amigas

•

Many thanks for your good advice, and the diagrams of the relevant screens, Roger. I'm certain they will help me. I admit most of what I have tried to load has been fairly straightforward, and others have loaded with Kick 1.3. As I have already mentioned to you I had trouble getting Jim MacBrayne's games to work once they had loaded, as they often refused to accept my inputs. I eventually got them working but for the life of me I can't remember what I did because I'd been trying for so long. When I have a day to spare I'll probably try again. (Barbara)

From Diane Rice of Weymouth

I would like, through the medium of "Probe", to thank those people whose votes won me second place in the best new author category and my game "The 12 Days of Christmas", first place, at the Adventurers' Convention this year.

I enjoyed writing this game so much it is wonderful to know that other people feel the same way about it. No small thanks are due to Terry Taylor for his patient and meticulous playtesting without which "12 days" would not be half the game it is. Thank you all.

•

You got my vote, as I think "12 days" is the most ingenious and devious game I have played for years. I know you probably won't consider yourself "a new author", but you are to those players who have only just discovered your games! Congratulations, your awards are well deserved. (Barbara)

From German Stchethnikov of Perm - 22, P. O. No. 576, Russia

Although there are several thousand kilometers between us, I hope for your help and responsiveness!

I am a great admirer of ZX Spectrum, especially of adventure games on it. Perhaps I am slightly touched, but I would like to receive from you your software catalogue and more information about all your adventures those names I don't know at all.

Also very, very much I would like to see with my own eyes some of your ad booklets and posters.... and your ads in the biggest computer magazines like Your Sinclair, Sinclair User, Crash, ZX Computing, Your Spectrum, Your Computer, Computer & Video-games, and what's more, in any form: copies, microcopies or microfiches.

Besides I am crazy about Michael Moorcock and his fantasy works and at present time I look for his series of books and I am fully confident that some of his works were converted into adventure games (but what names namely?).

Also for a long time I look for some other adventures: "The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole", "The Unorthodox Engineers: The Pen and The Dork", "My Secret File" - all from Mosaic Publishing, "Dennis Through The Drinking Glass" (with a sequel) and "Archimedes' Magic Screw" from Applications Software Specialists, and "The Fourth Protocol" from Century.

I shall be most grateful for your help and with many thanks to you and Yours Sincerely,

•

The above letter, with photograph of sender, was sent to Mandy, who forwarded it to me. We both think it is interesting and I feel this is more sincere than previous letters from the former eastern block.

I don't have any of the games mentioned, but I will probably sort out some good "home-grown" adventures from the "shelf stock" and my own collection and send them with a letter updating German with the current Spectrum scene.

If any reader has unwanted software or information they would like to send, I'll be pleased to include it in the same parcel. (Barbare)

Trivial McTavish and the Northern Hordes would like to congratulate the southern team on their brilliant win which was well deserved.



From Steve Clay of Ellesmere Port

I would like to thank all those who took the trouble to vote for myself and The Final Demand in the recent adventure awards. The knowledge that people enjoy your game enough to remember it and vote for it gives me a great deal of satisfaction.

Moving on to Wynne Snowdon's article on "Beginners", I had meant to respond earlier but it slipped my mind. Anyway, better late than never. When I originally wrote The Taxman Cometh on the Spectrum I had convinced myself it was a game suitable for beginners. My belief was based on the fact that all the answers to the puzzles were obvious if the player only looked hard enough.

One playtest report later and I found Taxman rated as an adventure for the more experienced! So asking the author to decide if their game is aimed at beginners is not really the thing to do, after all the author knows all the answers and is therefore in no position to judge.

Attracting new players has always been debated within the pages of Probe and there would seem to be no definite answer. Hopefully as more and more "adventures" appear on cover disks, and PD libraries continue to offer them for a pound or two, then new players are going to crop up. The only difficulty then is how to put them in touch with Probe!

•

Congratulations, Steve, the award is very well deserved. Thank you for the advice about which Amiga magazine to buy for the advertisements for PD discs. I'll buy a copy of CU Amiga when I get the chance to visit the appropriate department in W.H. Smiths. (Barbara)

From George E Hoyle of Doncaster

Congratulations for reaching 100 (the magazine, not you). It was very well put together. It was both informative and very entertaining.

Thank you for your kind words regarding my debut adventure game "Bnan: The Novice Barbarian" which you reviewed in the July issue. I am very glad you liked it.

What prompted me to write an adventure game in the first place was because I kept getting stuck while playing other peoples' adventure games. This was a big problem because I was a novice adventurer so I thought I would write one which I could complete myself. Another reason was because of the reduced amount of games being written for the Spectrum computer and I thought I would try and increase the interest for game players.

I would like to end on the subject of novice adventure players as expressed by Wynne Snowdon and Jaan Childs.

I think it would be a good idea if the writers were to make adventure games for novice players and adventure games for experienced players. The writers could make step-by-step easy games for the beginner which can teach them the do's and don'ts of adventure playing.

Bye bye and keep up the excellent work.

•

Excellent idea, George. We all need a helping hand to begin with, and I'm forever grateful that Adventure Probe started up just as I was beginning to play adventures. So when are you going to start the ball rolling by writing a "tutorial"? (Barbara)

From Tinkerbell

Over the last few issues various adventurers have vented their opinions on carry limits and mazes so I decided that I'd shove my oar in, too.

Concerning carry limits, yes I agree that it's realistic not to be able to pick up a boulder or carry thousands of items without your hands getting full - but since when do adventures have to be realistic? Surely the essence of fantasy is in being able to achieve the patently impossible?

As to mazes, I don't particularly like them. However, if an adventurer wants to put one into his game then fine, I'll still go about solving it, but I don't feel any sense of achievement once I've conquered a maze, I feel more a sense of relief that I've got through it. It's fine for some people to claim that mazes are just a way of padding out a game - and equally fine, from my point of view, to insist that they are a part of adventuring tradition. I can see both sides of the argument.

However, I dislike people trying to regulate what should and should not appear in an adventure. Reasonable carry limits, no mazes, believability. Where does it end? Eventually you'll end up with a list of regulations which will inhibit adventures to the extent that they all become the same, with all originality stifled.

Surely what appears in a game is down to the author and no one else? If someone plays one of my games, they are asking to be allowed into my world, to share my fantasy and abide by the rules which I have imposed. If adventurers don't like what they find, they don't have to play the game. I'm not standing over them with a double-barrelled shotgun, after all.

No doubt the debates will continue, and that is quite a healthy state of affairs. I don't care that some people will disagree with my views - wouldn't it be depressing if we all agreed with each other?

•

Yes, it would. There is such a rich variety of adventures due to the individuality of the authors there must be plenty for players to choose from. However, I wonder if sales figures would be affected if games containing mazes had to have a big M on the box? Perhaps you must just learn to live with it? As Grimmy, one of my favourite cartoon character says, "No one wants the seeds but they come with the tomato". (Barbara)

ADVENTURE PROBE 99 ISSUES AGO! by STEVE CLAY

ISSUE 3: August 1986

Still the plain cover but an increase to twenty pages. The reviews drop to just three but the letters from readers appear to have flooded in. Many are praising Probe but one or two kick off arguments that are still running today. Graphics in adventures anybody? The first article in the PBM series begins in this issue and there is also a program listing called the Blank Map Generator that via a printer will print out a sheet of squares that players can use to map their current quest. Help, again, seems to be the main priority and as with issue two there are dozens of games covered. From cryptic hints to sanalized solutions.

Issue 3 is slightly unbalanced but this is more than likely due to the fact that the editors can only work with what they receive and you can easily picture hundreds of adventurers raiding their map and solution files and sending them to Probe.

REVIEWS

BEYOND THE TUNNEL OF TIME

Written by Don and Freda Booner

Reviewed by Damian Steele on a C64

Although I dislike being completely negative about any adventure games, this one stinks. It was written in BASIC way back in 1981 and contains little to make it worth bothering with.

The puzzles - if they can be called that - are terrible and illogical. The opening sequence has you beside a castle with a closed drawbridge. Inputs such as directions, OPEN DRAWBRIDGE, CALL GUARD, KNOCK, OPEN SESAME and more are useless. When, in desperation, I asked for HELP looking for a clue, the drawbridge was lowered for no obvious reason.

The text itself has both spelling errors and sloppy line handling with text spilling from one line to the next. When I finally did venture inside the castle I found that objects were magically transformed for no stated reason and when I tried to pick up one the message "A sword penetrated your body. You are dead. Try again?" was displayed. My answer was a most definite NO! Unless you have a masochistic streak in you, avoid this one.

Available from Binary Zone PD on The Guild PD Adventures Col. 2. Price £6 on disc or tape.

GERBIL RIOT OF '67

Written by Simon Avery

Reviewed by Damian Steele on a C64

As I have already reviewed the PC version of this game (Vol.8 Issue 4) I shan't go into too much detail. The main point to mention is that there ARE differences between the previous version and this one; most notably the location of one of the parts needed to make the battery.

Most of the locations are identical as are most of the messages. There are some messages which players of the PC version won't recognize and a few object descriptions differ also. Game play is much the same so any hints for one version should still work with another.

Although originally written on the Amstrad, this game has been converted to a number of different machines now so if you haven't played it yet, you have no excuse now. Well worth a look particularly if your sense of humour is slightly wacky.

C64 version available from The Adventure Workshop. Price: £2.00 (tape or disc) - cheque/p.o. payable to P.M.Reynolds

Spectrum version available from the Adventure Workshop. Price: £2.00 (tape) £4.00 (disc) - cheque/p.o. payable to P.M.Reynolds.

Amstrad version available from WoW Software. Price: £2.00 (tape) £4.00 (disc) - cheque/p.o. payable to J.G.Pancott

PC version available from The Round Corner Shareware Library. Price: £3.00 - cheque/p.o. payable to S. Avery.

THE HAMMER OF GRIMMOLD

Written by Jack Lockerby

Reviewed by Phill Ramsay on an Amstrad CPC

The story behind the game is that the Hammer of Gnmold, the Dwarves symbol of health and virility has been stolen by the evil magician Valk, and hidden inside the Citadel, an impregnable fortress.

Now, I never have thought of Dwarves as particularly healthy or virile creatures: indeed, if my adventuring friend Gnmold is anything to go by, then perhaps grumpy, aggressive and surly would be more appropriate adjectives

Be that as it may, Gnmold, (no relation to Gnmold, as far as I know) King of the Dwarves, has summoned you to recover the artefact and bring joy back into his people's lives. This seems to be a trait which flows through every Dwarf. That peculiar ability to delegate such quests when there is the least danger of their risking their skin. Dwarves are not famous for their bravery, after all.

Another thing about the story line which made me laugh was the idea of bringing joy back into Dwarven lives. The Dwarven condition, at the best of times, is one of surly moroseness, so what they had slipped into since the theft of this artefact would really have to be seen to be disbelieved. Personally, I was of the opinion that Dwarves all over the adventuring world would be relishing this excuse to take their natural gnm pessimism to absurd lengths

However, Grimmold wished me luck, and told me that friends along the adventuring way would help me if I spoke his name. And then I was left all alone to face whatever perils this quest might throw at me. And what would be my reward if I succeeded? Riches beyond the dreams of avarice? Veneration by the Dwarven Nation? Not on your life. A surly "Thanks mate" is the best you can hope for. Not much to motivate you to accept the quest, but adventuring, as everyone knows, is no way to get rich quickly.

Deciding that the quest would, at least, give me an opportunity to test my adventuring expertise, I found myself at the edge of a forest, with unclimbleable mountains to the West. The first thing I always do in a new adventure is have a look around to get some ideas about what I'm expected to do and what objects have been left lying around for me to play with. I found that there wasn't much. After a few minutes, I found an inn. Feeling that this would be a good place to start to gain information, I entered, found an empty table and sat down. Examining the landlord, I was informed that he was a friend. This was a promising start, and no doubt the landlord would be a mine of valuable information and gossip. So, in a low voice, I said to him "Grimmold",

He looked at me and passed on some secret information which would be of immense use in my quest. Something about Troll dust - I love trolls. So, as a drunk rushed out, I continued looking around the inn, and eventually found a crowbar which I felt certain would be of great use in cracking the skulls of any creature who wanted to try stopping me succeeding in my quest. The three hooded figures at the next table were by now taking an interest in me, so, being a sociable soul, I said hello to them. They obviously thought this was a grave insult, because one of them rushed over to me and plunged a dagger into my heart. To say I was surprised would be a bit of an exaggeration, after all, we've all been killed occasionallyhaven't we?

So, I tried again. This time I made a point of *not* saying hello to the three hooded men – and one of them killed me again. Now, I don't know about you, but I tend to get irritated with people when they keep killing me, so I decided that I would even the score a little. The less said about that the better.

Having worked out the problem in the inn, I managed to catch up with the drunk who had rushed out, and he turned out to have an object which I would need later on. Further exploration brought me to a river, which had smooth stone stepping stones leading across it. Unfortunately, they are too smooth to be crossed, and it wasn't long before I was reloading my position.

Going in the opposite direction, I found a woodsman sitting by a fire. Being cautious after my experiences so far, I found that he was a friend, despite his having a lethal-looking axe. However, he proposed a swap of a sharpening stone for the axe. This sounded like a good offer. The only problem was that I didn't have the stone. So that was my next objective. In the course of looking for this object, I found a dead giant, and he provided me with the means to cross the stream, which led, in turn, to my managing to find the required stone.

On entering the inn, I found that my friend the landlord was dead. Making a careful search of the inn I found several things which were of help to me. Perhaps the most important was an item which protected me from attack by the followers of Valt, who can be identified very easily by the fact that they wear hoods.

Later on I found a group of Dwarves building a bridge (it was nice to see Dwarves doing something constructive, for a change), but they were one plank short. (The less said about that the better) and the bridge could not be crossed until this was provided. Shortly afterwards, I freed a wizard, and was given a magic rope by way of reward – and this item was more than useful in several locations.

The entrance to the Citadel is quite well hidden, and unless you read the location descriptions very carefully, it's very easy to miss it, so beware. However, once inside the citadel, there are Dwarves to be found, and helped. It's not completely one-sided, as by helping them you will in effect be helping yourself. However, the passages are patrolled by random squads of Orc guards, and if you're unlucky enough to be seen, you won't live to regret it. Obviously, some kind of disguise is needed, but where is it?

There are lots of doors to be opened but only if you have the correct key. There is a master key available, but unfortunately, it's being guarded by a huge eight foot tall Orc with a very large sword. I'll leave you to work out how to persuade the Orc to let you take the key away.

Behind these doors you will find such diverse creatures as a vampire with toothache, a ravenous rat, a cry-baby Dragon, and a wish-happy Genie. Virtually all have things which you will need, and if you don't take care or make preparations before meeting some of them, you will meet an untimely demise.

Eventually, if you have the right items with you, you may finally confront the evil Valk and persuade him to part with the Hammer of Gimmold. You will then be free to return to the Dwarven village and be rewarded with a few words of thanks – but not with gold. After all, we all know how stingy Dwarves are with their nuggets, don't we? I'm just waiting for the next time they need a hero to get them out of a mess.....

The Hammer of Gimmold is quite an enjoyable game, well programmed, and well thought out. There are lots of high-quality problems to be solved, and many sudden deaths to be avoided. In fact, the sudden deaths, rather than being an irritant, help you to stay on your toes and to think of consequences before you act.

There is, of course, a ramsave facility, so you can always retrieve yourself if you do something totally stupid – and I found myself making frequent use of this option.

The game itself is in one part, is quite large, and is well worth playing. I found no bugs within the game, and only a few (very) minor grammatical errors. They will, of course, have been removed by the time this review gets published.

The game has been converted to Amstrad using the PAW, and so is available on disc only and runs under CPM.

I found all the problems to be logical and solvable with a little thought, but overall I didn't have a terribly difficult time. I'd gauge its difficulty level at somewhere between intermediate and advanced. Of course, for those adventurers who might get stuck, there is always Phil Reynolds halpline.

The Hammer of Grimmold is an entertaining adventures, one which presents a nice challenge to complete. It is easily worth the asking price.

Amstrad version available from The Adventure Workshop. Price: £4.00 (disc only)

Spectrum version available from Zenobi Software, Deep Waters Vol.1 Price: £4.99 (tape) please add 25p p&p.

Amiga & PC (under Spectrum emulation) version available from Zenobi Software. Price: single game – £2.49 plus 25p p&p. Deep Waters Vol.1 £5.99 plus 25p p&p.

Atari ST/STE version available from Zenobi Software or Adventure Probe Software (under licence). Price: £2.49 (including Mutant & Domas of Sha).

C64 version available from Adventure Probe Software. Price: £2.00 (tape/disc)

TREASURE ISLAND

Written by Dean Hodgson

Reviewed by Damian Steele on a C64

Treasure Island is designed as an introductory adventure for the complete beginner. It was written in BASIC around 1983 and places the player on an almost deserted island with the instruction that you should find the treasure.

The commands for the game are limited to N, S, E, W, dig and a magic word which is found along the way. Among the locations the player will visit are such as the cliffs, the crashed plane, the sandy beaches and the quicksand.

The one object that you find is picked up automatically so there is little left to do apart from explore and try not to get killed too many times. Death comes in the form of either sinking in the quicksand or falling from the cliffs.

There are only relatively minor points against it which include a few spaces missing between words and a word or two spilling onto the next line. Treasure Island is a simple game (and I mean that literally as there are but 15 moves needed to finish it) which is ideal for novice adventurers.

Available from Binary Zone PD. This adventure is on The Guild PD Adventures Collection 2. Price £6 on disc or tape.

rites of Passage

Written by Damian Steele

Reviewed by Jenny Perry on a C64

You are a novice aspiring to become a member of the Family of Elders. The Family are the governing body of what is left of mankind after the Race wars of the previous decade. Most of civilization has gone but now society has clawed its way out of the ashes and is trying to rebuild itself.

Some are working on technology, others are looking to the distant past to something long forgotten, Majik. Only members of the Family are permitted to make full use of this rediscovered power and it is every child's dream to join the Family, but only a few are selected to try. You are one of the lucky ones and today is the day when you either join or are rejected, never to try again....

You begin in an ordinary looking room furnished with cupboards and a table. Nearby are 3 locked doors and try as I might, I could *not* escape those first 4 locations and a 4% score. Eventually I asked for an unsavory hint and continued the game.

There is nobody to talk to but you will encounter various animals, who can all provide help in their own way. I liked Rudi, the accident-prone dog who tries to help but only succeeds in demolishing a room, and Custard, the sweet little ginger cat who retrieves a vital item which Rudi neglected to pick up. This is Rudi's debut game - I'm sure we'll see more of him in the future (Tarmirudi 2, perhaps?).

The tasks you have to complete include switching on the electricity in a water-filled room, a shocking task at the best of times, even if you *had* remembered your swimsuit. You must also decipher a code to open a door once the power is working. Luckily my appalling handwriting gave me a clue as to which number to try. Later on you freeze and beke alternately; there is a point of no return here which, of course, I didn't realize until I attempted to climb up the slippery slope that I'd slid down so easily. I had a smashing time before I could go back to where I wanted.

This adventure is easy to map, each location is chock-a-block with things to do and it will brighten any dull weekend.

Available from The Adventure Workshop. Price: £2.00 (tape or disc) - cheque/p.o. payable to P.M. Reynolds.

TABBY

Reviewed by Harold Dixon on an A1200

Attention all adventure writers. Have you ever longed to produce some presentable drawings or pictures in your adventures but find working with the mouse or the joystick impracticable? If you have an Amiga or PC - I'm not sure about other makes, then why not try TABBY?

TABBY is an electronic unit that you may connect to your computer with the aid of a special interface. Software is loaded to gain compatibility and then you are ready to produce the desired results! It is a drawing tablet with a pen attached, and the pen works just like your mouse or joystick only in this case with a great deal more accuracy. It is simply like drawing with a pencil on paper! Just draw on the tablet and watch your work appear accurately on screen.

The connections are easy to make the software easy to load - of course you will need some sort of paint program to get it to work properly - DELUXE PAINT or PROVECTOR, or the like. Provector was given free on the mag front. It is quite good for anyone who wants to have a go but can't afford the paint program - contact Amiga Format.

You can trace things from newspapers or books the pen seems to work quite adequately through paper card or even plastic and of course you may use any of the other facilities your paint program may offer.

TABBY seems to take over from the mouse easily - though if you keep it connected, the mouse is ever available to take over at a moment's notice - same goes for the joystick! A good additional utility well worth a try, especially if you think graphics will help your adventure.

It is a very small tablet but covers the entire screen quite accurately and adequately - its very size is indeed an advantage. The drive software is also hard drive installable for those of you so equipped.

I have had difficulty drawing with the mouse and after very little time found TABBY much more practicable and I think, not too expensive.

Available from Micrograf International Ltd, Unit Q4, Penfold Works, Impenal Way, Watford, Herts WD2 4YY. Fax 0923 244041. Price about £63 including interface for the computer, software for compatibility and p&p.

SERENDIPITY

Written by Martin Freemantle

Reviewed by Wynne Snowdon on a Spectrum

You are Willy who, for the want of something better to do, decide to seek Billy McEwes who has gone missing. Billy is the son of Big Bill McEwes a Scottish millionaire who will, no doubt, reward you handsomely for the safe return of his son.



Your adventure starts outside a house. In keeping with most adventures, the front door is locked and there is no other way in at this stage of the game. As there is no key to the door you must visit other locations to find an alternative way to open it. An early visit to the local tavern is recommended as is helping the landlord. Bothersome the dwarves will not only be helpful but also humorous - depending of course, on your particular sense of humour. Eventually, you should be able to smash a way into the house but, even then, you won't be able to explore the entire building as some parts are inaccessible from the front entrance - a burglar's nightmare! A stone troll will stop you moving to one room but solve a puzzle and you'll have a clue to adding yourself of him.

When you have found almost everything the house has to offer, which is far from easy and you won't yet have passed the troll you move on to a field full of tents. You can get money by backing a winner but need a ticket to enter the race tent so are advised to visit the fortune teller. Another tent hides a homicidal dustbin and here your quest will and unless you can immobilise it. I don't know what your particular shade of lipstick is but you're sure to find it in one of the tents. In another you should find the means to pass the stone troll in the house especially if you help an imbecile.

Moving on you arrive at a tree with a high trapdoor entrance. You need a couple of things to reach the trapdoor and inside you find a very embarrassed man. Leaving the tree by another entrance brings you to some colourful paving stones surrounding a well which must be traversed in the correct order – or you're dead. Finally find a way to climb down the well and open up the secret passages and you will find that which you seek.

This adventure is clever and one that most of you will enjoy doing. It has the usual devious problems posed by Martin Freemantle but the text is written in a very different style and, if read with tongue in cheek, is quite humorous. It's not filled out with loads of locations but there's an awful lot to do and find in most of them. The problems you face are well thought out and, while the answers are logical, most are quite difficult to solve. Thankfully there are some clues in the text. I certainly wouldn't have managed to complete it without some help – normal for me.

Ramsave/ramload is available and their use is recommended as many of the traps are killers. But when you meet the dustbin the program won't let you ramload to get away so it's prudent to make a permanent save before reaching this point.

My one criticism, if it can be called that, is the flatness of the ending. One minute my tiny brain was overworking and suddenly the answer was given without my doing much at all. However, this appears to be only the first program and at least one more will follow. When available I certainly will buy it and, if it's anything near the standard of Serendipity, will be well satisfied with the purchase.

Available from Dream World Adventures. Price Spectrum £3.00 (tape & +D disk), £2.50 (if supply own +3 disk). Amiga (under Spectrum emulation) £3.00 including free emulator.

AN INTRODUCTION TO LAURENCE CREIGHTON'S ADVENTURES

Written by Joan Williams

With the welcome news that L.C. has decided not to abandon his Spectrum/Amiga fans and we are after all going to be able to play The Well of Zol, it may be a useful exercise to take a look back over the past couple of years to remind ourselves of just how much he has given to the adventure scene.

My own collection consists of 15 in total, I think I have a copy of every game L.C. has ever written, either on tape or more recently on the Amiga disc. Each game has been a joy to play, never easy and guaranteed to tax one's brain to the limit, yet one never gets the better of L.C. Even after 15 games, he is still able to frustrate and confuse. I suggest that there is a sort of format that has emerged since his very first game and it is as follows.

- 1) You can never find a light.
- 2) Never assume the obvious.
- 3) There's usually a boat, either with a hole in it or lacks oars.
- 4) You should always search things twice.
- 5) Objects don't always behave in the way one expects.
- 6) If you easily solved a problem, you'll regret it later.

Over the next few months, I aim to write a short review of each game, and propose to do them in alphabetical order, for no other reason than it's easier.

The first game to look at is BEHOLD ATLANTIS (I think this was his first game - it's certainly one of the earliest)

[I'm sure someone will correct *both* of us, but I think The Lost Temple may be Laurence's first published adventure, but we won't fall out over such a trivial matter - will we? - Barbara]

BEHOLD ATLANTIS

As a child, you dreamed of Atlantis, the lost Kingdom of the seas. You scrimped and saved enough money to make the journey to Greece and here you are, ready to begin an adventure of a life time

You start in your hotel room. A good look around is required, and remember the basic rule - examine things twice. Dress yourself in your holiday gear and off you go. I can clearly remember being stuck at this point, I had yet to learn that LC doesn't believe in making things easy at the start of his games, so I'll just say that if you wait around, things will happen eventually.

You will need to obtain some sandals somehow, and some money.

The first five locations are pecked with problems - all of which should be solved before you go for a swim. Once under water, if you haven't got a sharp knife, you'd better surface and do something about it, otherwise you'll get no further.

The good news is that ahead of you are locations full of surprises and problems - the bad news is you'll have to find your way through a maze, although you can drop objects as you go, so maybe that's OK.

Needless to say, there are no easy ways to solve the problems. A king wants a crown, the queen needs a necklace, Leskos wants a ring, but going about finding these objects will take all your ingenuity, and as likely as not you'll be scratching your head wondering what to do next or where to go. Swinging and jumping is what's called for, plus a bit of crawling, but I say this with hindsight, when I first played this game it seemed that my euphonia when solving one problem was quickly squashed when confronted by the next. Those who have become fans of LC will know what I mean; one always waits for the crunch-time, or has the feeling that they've missed something vital.

Location-wise, the game isn't huge, but it is so well written and totally believable. As an early example of LC's work, it's still brilliant today. In fact, it's one of those games that will stand the test of time. I re-played it recently, and still got stuck, despite having maps, notes, hints, etc. A great introduction to someone who was at that time a newcomer on the adventure writing scene, and what an introduction.

Available from Zenobi Software - please see inside back cover for address.

Spectrum version Price £1.99 (tape) £3.49 (+3 disc). Also available on the +3 compilation disc "Jenny's Disk" with Lost Temple, Eclipse, and Treasure of Santa Menas - Price : £5.99

Amiga & PC (under Spectrum emulation) on "Jenny's Disk" details as above - Price: £5.99 (including free emulator)

Please add 25p to cover p&p

Next month - There's a Bomb Under Parliament, Bermuda Triangle, Curse of Calutha and Eclipse.

A REPORT ON THE ADVENTURERS' CONVENTION OF 1994 by DAMIAN STEELE AFIO APFIWN

What can I say about the Convention? The first thing that springs to mind was how much fun it was.

The day started early for myself and my three travelling companions. We left The Dwarven Mines of Chudleigh at around five-thirty (Yes, A.M.) to drive up to the convention at the Royal Angus Thistle Hotel. The hotel is pretty much in the middle of Birmingham so for many people getting there was like playing an adventure. Sensibly the organizers – and of course I am referring to Vicky Jackson and her hard working helpers – included a map with the tickets/s. I am told that this led to a number of conversations between drivers and navigators along the lines of "Quick, which way now?", "I don't know, try north".

Anyway, I believe most people arrived okay even if a few (Wynne Snowdon and Eilan Mahon to name but two) had trouble finding their way out again.

When we finally reached the hotel and parked up we crossed the bridge to the hotel door and discovered that since our last visit security had been improved – the door was locked with a coded device. Lurking suspiciously nearby was a button and a small circular grille. Using our best adventuring skills we deduced that the two were connected. Having spoken to reception via the grille we were admitted to the hotel feeling happy for having solved a major puzzle before the clock had even struck nine-seventeen.

We sauntered west up a short flight of steps and then down the carpeted corridor sure in the knowledge that we'd be in the same room this year as last. Sure, that is, until we arrived to find that we weren't. Nevertheless we continued undaunted until two beings appeared from the depths of Ye Olde Alery (Ok, the bar). Preparing ourselves for the encounter we were ready to attack when we realized that the two were none other than Larry Horsfield and Marian (sorry, Martin) Freemantle, who informed us of the new location.

So we wandered into the convention room to be greeted by ourselves. Turning away from the mirrored wall we saw one or two familiar faces and a number of not-so-familiar ones. Those there welcomed us warmly and introductions were made before we began to talk about the Megapoints Competition and who would play when. My two companions were both first-timers but were keen to have a go (despite their insistence that they would both probably get a minus score) and we all signed up having paid a nominal fee.

From then on it became a case of setting up computers, displaying any wares for sale, playing some of the many games on show and meeting all the strange and wonderful adventurers who wandered through the doors before gathering around Bob Adams to hear who received this year's awards.

One character I feel I must mention is Miss Demeanour who awarded me membership to the select group who are permitted to write APFIWN after their name. Although honoured at receiving this via Probe (Vol. 8 Issue 8) I was mystified as to its meaning. Mystified until the convention that is. For those who weren't there, it means "Always Poking Finger in Wasps' Nests". Miss Demeanour's owner will remain nameless other than to say she wonders how they got the dog on the beer advert to paint the wall.

After a full and most enjoyable day most people retired to either their rooms or the bar area to relax for a time before we went for a meal in the evening.

Once again (like last year) the maal was at Antonio's Italian Restaurant, the difference was that this time we filled most of the restaurant with adventurers. I got the impression that some of the locals were left wondering what hit them.

After an excellent and quite reasonably priced maal we returned to the hotel for the Trivial Pursuits Challenge.

It was decided that the group should split into two teams and would play as the Northern Horde against the Southerners. It must be said that the Southerners somewhat out-numbered the Northerners but that is the way they wanted to play. I shan't dwell too much on the games themselves other than to say we played the best out of three and the Northern Horde came in a close second. (2-0).

Although exhausted after the day I feel safe in saying that everyone had a really great time and I'm sure we all look forward to next year's Adventurers' Convention.

DEJA VU - THE ALTERNATIVE REPORT OF THE FIFTH ANNUAL ADVENTURERS' CONVENTION by PETER CLARK

Well, deja vu is what I felt as I drove down the A38M, past the flyover and saw the Royal Angus Thistle Hotel on the left. Some people, however, failed to see the wood for the trees, or the hotel for the traffic as, although the hotel sign was several floors high, it was nearly overlooked by certain members of the northern contingent! I am also reliably informed that the same people passed the hotel at least three times while trying to leave Birmingham! Yes, it was that time again. Time for assorted idiots and friends to descend upon Birmingham for the Annual Adventurers' Convention.

I parked the car on the eleventh floor, otherwise known as the roof, of the N.C.P. carpark which joins the hotel. Well, there was a sign at the entrance which indicated that floors 11 and 12 were allocated to hotel guests. No, I didn't work it out either! If floor 11 is the roof, where was floor 12? This proved to be an unfortunate decision as, although there was no real problem in carrying my small amount of luggage and the accompanying bootful of computer hardware and software to the lift and thus into the hotel, the return trip on Sunday morning was marred by the fact that the carpark lift was out of action and all the gear had to be carried from the hotel bridge to the car via several sets of merry grey narrow winding concrete stairs.

Obtaining a key from reception and getting installed in my room proved uneventful. Did I trace a faint look of apprehension on the faces of the staff? Did they remember previous years? And, if so, why had they remained at the hotel? Come back Vivaldi, all is forgiven. Some adventurers had arrived at the hotel the day before in order to "see the sights". At least that's what they called it. I do get the feeling, however, that most of the "sights" were seen inside the larger shops in the town and the husbands returned to the hotel with more than a touch of that well known ailment, Financial Cramp! This is identified by the sharp pains which are experienced in the wallet area!

I unpacked my suitcase, checked that the computer which I had brought with me was still in working order and sank at least two cups of tea. The time had now reached 4.30pm. A trip into the Lounge seemed a good idea.

As I walked the final few yards past the Cloakrooms, I heard the sound of laughter. This was it! The start of yet another Adventurers' Convention. Rounding the corner, I saw a circle of chairs occupied by many old friends.

There were a few faces that I had not seen before, mainly from the north, including a lady from Durham, and I use the term loosely, with a large plastic bag for a head! (Hi there Loobiloo!) But something, or rather someone, was missing. A gentleman from "The Smoke" had not arrived and questions were being asked! It was suggested that the problem might be caused by telephones and/or phone cards! This proved to be totally incorrect as it was subsequently discovered that he was involved in some games that were being played in a bedroom. No! Don't get me wrong, I mean adventure games!

With such a long time having passed since most of us had met, there were some vital things to discuss. These included the vast numbers of Marmite tins that were seen in the area and the problems of how to decide just when the Marmite jar is actually empty!

Mixing with people from different parts of the country enables you to get an idea of how others live. For instance, life in Hampton is not what you might imagine. Do you know that there is a place there where you can have your ankles bound together with rubber strips! All in the name of health of course. This information was obtained from a young and innocent convent girl! She also mentioned something about custard but I was not sure just how that fitted in with the rubber strips! And there was I thinking that the area was so respectable too!

The residential arrangements that some people had made also made the mind boggle. I overheard someone being asked where they were staying and the reply was, "In the Boot!" Very strange! I wonder if N.C.P. were offering a better deal than the hotel?

Most people had been travelling for a long time and needed a while to recover, but it was decided that we would eat in the town later in the evening. Some went to a Chinese while others decided that Antonio's Italian Emporium was "*Justa da Joba!*" What can be said about Antonio's except that it was excellent. Both food and service were top of the range. Just who was George the waiter referring to when he said "*Mama Mia! Zee bloody foreigners are in tonight!*"?

After a good meal and even better company, everyone returned to the hotel bar for a few jags before turning in.

Why was Vicky so worried about meeting strange men in the lift? What did she think they could do to sabotage the convention? Whose rooms were they going to with the skeleton keys? And..... Why didn't they turn up???? Or did they, and Vicky never let on?

The following morning the whole crew gathered for breakfast and, even before the restaurant was cleared, the sight of figures carrying television sets into the convention room became the norm. I did wonder just what the other hotel residents must have thought. Did they think that we were television repair crews out for their annual breakfast or did they believe that there was a concerted effort being made by a party of burglars to relieve the hotel rooms of their televisions? By 10.30am the convention room had been sorted out and was lined with tables, each one sporting at least one computer. Intent faces stared at flickering monitors. Each engrossed in his or her personal battle with the forces of evil, monsters or other figments of the author's imagination.

At intervals of around twenty minutes, several smiling adventurers made their way to one end of the room and changed places with a similar group who were sitting in a row facing computer screens. At the shout of "Go!" each began tapping furiously on a keyboard.

During the following twenty minutes the smiles gradually faded and the sounds of mumbled curses wafted across the room. [*] What I want to know is -

- (a) Why couldn't I get out of that hut?
- (b) Why couldn't I wear the blanket?
- (c) Why was Josep so unhelpful?

Lunchtime came and went along with the appearance of partly eaten baguettes! Does what you eat for lunch reveal something about your character? If so, what can you tell about the person found eating cheese and cnsip sandwiches? I believe it was this very same person who made a concerted attempt to wreck a table at breakfast the following morning.

Lunch over, there was a call for hush from that suave "*MAN ABOUT TOWN*", Bob "Ampster" Adams. Yes, once again he had been volunteered to present the awards. Times must be hard though as this year shirt sleeves were the order of the day, the suit either having been left with the pawnbroker or in the back of the car! The full list of awards will be published elsewhere in Adventure Probe so I will make little mention of them here. I would just like to ask Bob if he would be prepared to let everyone know what was written on his certificate some time.

[Yes, I would also like to know - please send me a short letter for publication - Barbara]

By 5.00pm things were drawing to a close. Adventurers were gradually drifting back to their rooms and the convention room was emptying. Arrangements had been made for most of us to eat at Antonio's again so we met in the Lounge at 7.30pm ready for the off. A fleet of taxis ferried us once more to Antonio's Emponum where we all enjoyed another meal. I know what the goldfish was up to but I missed the bit about the goat! "Follow that cab! - Follow those people!" Fed and watered, or maybe wine, we made our way back to the hotel where a game of Trivial Pursuits to the death had been arranged between the north and the south. The result was South 2 : North Nil. A certain amount of luck went with this result and, without wishing to take anything away from the victors, the luck of the northern contingent was definitely "OUT". The northern players proved that they had a good knowledge of the eating habits of early aviators but little concerning the finer points of committing suicide! (Pass the Black and Decker!) The evening/night ended in the early hours of Sunday. The exact time depends upon whether your watch had been altered or not!

The worst part of any of the conventions that I have attended is the goodbyes over breakfast and the thought that it will be another twelve months before most of us will see each other again. I know that it has been said before, but I'll say it again. "If you have never been to any of the Adventurers' Conventions then you do not know what you have missed." The talk over breakfast and the final cup of coffee was, "Roll on next year and let's do it again." All I can add to that is, "Hear, hear," on behalf of all those who attended I would like to thank Vicky Jackson, Larry Horsfield and everyone who had a hand in the organisation of this year's convention. There were, unfortunately, some missing faces, in particular from WoW Software. You may not have been there Joan and Maunce, but you were certainly in our thoughts.

It is more than likely that I have left some people out of this report. If you are one of those then you may consider yourself lucky that you were missed! If, however, you can recognize yourself somewhere above then all I can say is thank you for doing what you did 'cos if people weren't so amusing then there would be nothing for me to put in the *Alternative Report*.

Well, that's it. Another Adventurers' Convention has come and gone. I would like to send my regards and best wishes to all those friends who were there and I hope to see some of you again in a few weeks at Hamilton Halls. There remains just a few unanswered questions:-

- (e) Just where did my badge get to?
- (b) Did Jenny wear the Star Trek earrings on Saturday evening?
- (c) Where did Jenny get that hat and did she return it?
- (d) Why was Jenny seen putting a chocolate log in her ear?
- (e) Did Loma look at the T.P. questions and then re-seal the packet. If so, why didn't the northern team win?
- (f) Will Grumpy sort out Horace, Doc and Snow White?
- (g) Did Wynne go to the bank via Beechy Head?
- (h) Was Larry registered in the hotel?
- (i) Who was Mrs. Freemantle?
- (j) How long has East Anglie been north of Birmingham?
- (k) Will whoever it was that tried to clear a breakfast table in one go manage to perfect the trick by next year?
- (l) Why was there a police raid on Woolworths and why were they out of ballpoint pens?

Answers please on the back of a used £10 note.

[*] Sharon Harwood's "The Long Journey" is the game used for this year's Megapoints competition and I understand it will be released in due course. (Barbara)

THE ADVENTURERS' CONVENTION 1994

A HORROR STORY by SHARON HARWOOD

The young woman leaned over the bathroom sink. She could feel the mists rising and she fought desperately to control them.. they came fast, filling her mind completely..

There were two of them. Two women that she recognized instantly. They were running wildly up a road. It was a big road. A Motorway. They were running up the slow lane of a Motorway. They were giggling. They were coming....

The mists cleared and the woman sighed deeply. That was the third time today. The first time had been only an hour ago, a vision of two women driving towards her, two women in a "Mobile Television Showroom". She'd dismissed it, she remembered, preferring to believe that it hadn't happened but then the second had come only a few minutes later.. a man leaving a book store in the City. A man whose face was deeply familiar. A man laden with books and left with very little cash.

Now she knew it was happening. She'd known yesterday, hadn't she? When she'd seen the couple in the bar in the Hotel. The Scottish couple, a woman and her men, a hairy man. She'd known them instantly, she'd known the date was right but she'd ignored all the signs and now the time was almost upon her...

She left the bathroom then, a woman whose brow was creased with anxiety. She returned to her bed, it was her evening off and she knew that sleep was the only way to prepare for the day ahead...

They gathered in the bar. The Scottish woman and her hairy man, the women from the Motorway, the man from the bookstore and the two of the many televisions. They gathered in the bar and awaited the arrival of the others.

As they came the woman tossed in her bed, the sheets wet with her perspiration..

There was a group of them in a small Italian Restaurant.. the Scottish couple had been joined by more of their kind. They spoke loudly in their "foreign" accent, filling the eating house with their joy and laughter.

The woman moaned in her bed, her long blond hair sticking haphazardly around her face..

There were others in the Hotel and another group at a Chinese Restaurant.. The woman from the Motorway, still giggling, among their Hamilton Halls friends, the man with the cigarette drinking his expensive lager

The woman left her bed and wandered into the kitchen. Fetching a glass from the cupboard she poured herself a drink of water before returning to her slumber...

They were altogether once more, their numbers growing steadily.. Their laughter filled the bar of the Hotel, sending the other guests to their rooms and disrupting the staff with their furniture rearranging..

The woman slept soundly as the group disbanded and went to their beds and the morning light sent the dreams fading into distant memory as she awoke feeling surprisingly refreshed. She busied herself with her chores, humming loudly as she hoovered the small flat but it was not long before the mists returned...

They were in a room. A smallish room that was recognized immediately. A crowd of familiar and unfamiliar faces, laughing and chatting as they went about their business. Computer terminals lined the walls and the man in the corner cackled insanely as he dallied upon one. His long hair attempting to hide the wild look in his eye. The young one was back also, the University student who had grown up steadily within the group. He was eating his sandwiches as he stared at a screen, a small smile lighting his face.

As the woman moved around the flat her eyes took on a glazed expression. She was seeing it all now, the group had become a part of her as they moved around the room and the bar, the young man with the hat and his girlfriend, newcomers to the scene, the scientist with the deep eyes, the tall man who spoke constantly, they were all there weaving together into some sort of odd blanket. A blanket that covered the Hotel and left other guests disorientated and confused..

The man with the cigarette was talking now. The room had turned quiet and he spoke with a voice that kept them hanging on his every word. Occasionally they would laugh with him or cheer and clap as he handed out the decorative certificates. They were one, an odd group of many ages. A group that shared one interest and used all their force to make that interest the centre of the weekend..

As the evening approached the young woman left her flat, her expression blank, all colour gone. She made her way through the City, her trance-like state effecting those around her. She travelled quietly, her mind racing with the events in the Hotel..

The room thumped steadily with the sound of one computer. Two women sat before its screen, controlling the little man whose footsteps could be heard all around. Small groups of people sat in clusters, talking quietly among themselves, the long day beginning to take its toll. One woman, the one of the lost voice, snaked away from the crowd, her eyes heavy with the sleep that would consume her soon. The man with the cigarette sat silently in a corner, taking in everything that went on about him, his mind a block of pigeon holes in which he stored the memories. The tall man had joined the Essex lasses at their computer, his voice could be heard above the thumping as he assisted in their progress. Across the room, the giggling girl and the man of the many tattoos had joined the growing number of people packing away their equipment, they talked quietly as they worked.

As the woman entered the Hotel she could feel their presence instantly. They were reviving themselves now, their equipment stacked silently back in their rooms, they were preparing themselves for the long night ahead. She moved toward the reception and her head jerked suddenly as she became aware of their presence... They were leaving the elevator, a huge crowd of them. Laughing and chatting insanely they descended upon the reception area and the woman thought she would scream. She rushed through the staff door, hearing them behind her. She rushed through the door and away from them as quickly as she could.

The crowd had left the Hotel. They climbed loudly into the waiting taxis and made their way to the Italian Restaurant. As one they moved into its interior, the insane laughter filling it instantly, causing an atmosphere of horror among the other diners. They filed steadily to their seats, each eager to eat and be merry. The drinks flowed fast, the crowd becoming louder as the time passed. The conversation ranging wildly as the friends delved deep into the hearts of each other... The man with the tattoos spoke quietly of their origins... the scientist, his deep eyes looking slightly confused, confessed his age to a waiting crowd... the Geordie woman laughed and smoked, smoked and laughed...

The woman brushed back her long blond hair and went on duty. She could feel them returning and her blood rushed coldly around her body. She left the bar and moved into the lounge area, her whole self stiffening as she moved over to the small circle that formed within the corner. Desperate to avoid eye contact she tidied the tables and lifted the empty glasses before returning to the relative safety of the bar. She was lucky, she felt, they weren't moving her way very regularly and when they did come they were alone, buying their drinks quietly before returning to their fold.

The group was coming together again, the tall man's arrival marking the beginning of the long awaited challenge. The Trivial Pursuit board was set up and much bantering followed as the group tried desperately to arrange themselves into suitable positions...

The woman left the bar area and made her way through to the lounge, the tray in her hand shaking wildly as she fought to control her emotions. They were all there now, arguing and laughing as the man with the deep eyes read out the questions and the 'pies', 'wedges' and 'cheeses' were won or lost. She collected the empty glasses, her eyes passing momentarily over the Northern Hordes, she was sure they were providing their own liquor but she bit back her anger, fighting anxiously to keep her expression pleasant.

The game was won at last. The Superior South has triumphed and their overly large group celebrated as the small Northern contingent successfully fought back an urge to shout "Unfair". The crowd had once more gone back to their smaller group discussions, the newcomers fitting in nicely with their new friends as the conversation ranged absurdly taking in all aspects of their everyday lives...

The women glanced knowingly at her watch. Last orders had been called some time ago and even allowing for the extra hour, she was aware that the time was passing fast. It would be over very shortly, they would disband quietly and it would be over once more... until next time. She picked up her tray and left her place behind the bar... this would be her last time, she was sure. They would be leaving now. She'd felt some of them go already, they'd retired to their rooms and she'd felt the pressure lifting within her mind. She made her way through to the lounge...

The friends were still in deep discussion and a small crowd around the sofa were the only ones to notice the woman as she entered the lounge. The man with the deep eyes laughed nervously as he noticed an expression of horror pass over her face. The giggling woman laughed aloud and the tall man looked momentarily frightened. They all watched her as she moved silently around the room searching desperately for another empty glass... The man with the tattoos shifted nervously in his seat as the woman approached and the scientist whispered behind his hand as she strode away through the open doorway. There were still ten half-full glasses littering the small round tables...

The woman strode back to the bar area and carefully placed the all-but-empty tray on the shiny counter. She walked slowly toward the store cupboard door and opened it silently, her face blank, her mind a tornado of angry thoughts...

Reaching up behind the bar mat she pulled out an Uzi machine-gun and checked the ammunition... her blond hair sticking insanely to her wet cheeks as her concentration centred on the weapon. Closing the cupboard she placed the gun under her jacket and walked silently across the thick carpet. She could hear them as she approached, all of them still deep within their conversations, their voices booming through the cotton wool of her mind...

She was at the door now. None of them had moved, the woman of the lost voice was chattering insanely to the tired audience... the new woman with the dark hair nodded quietly as she talked to the librarian beside her... the crowd around the sofa leaned across their small table engrossed in discussions of Castles...

As she reached under her suit jacket and pulled out the weapon, the woman's mind receded back to previous years and she remembered the many before them. There had been so many, she thought, she'd killed so many in the past... gradually she had cut their numbers by at least a hundred but still they returned, the old familiar faces joined steadily by new ones, still they persisted in this bizarre ritual... they had not learnt by their mistakes... they would not learn that they weren't welcome... they would return next year, she was sure, but at least there would be fewer ...

She lifted the gun and began firing insanely into the small horrified crowd...

ADVENTURING SAYINGS by MARY SCOTT-PARKER

"Behind every unsuccessful man, there stand an adventuring woman."
(Unsuccessful man)

"Behind every adventuring woman, there stands a man, looking at his watch."
(Adventuring woman)

Convention News

Last week, as you may know, the annual meeting of the Adventurers' Convention was held at the Angus Thistle Hotel in Birmingham.

Almost everyone who was anyone in the adventuring world was there - with only a few notable exceptions. Grimwold The Dwarf was there, of course, keeping a tight hold of his nuggets, as we have come to expect from him in years past. Other notable dignitaries included such people as Sweagol, who was taking some time off from his duties in Lord of the Rings, The Grue, who was sitting doing what comes naturally to Grues, and not to mention the redoubtable Ellen Mahon. No, I said not to mention!

Huddled to one side in a dark and neglected corner sat a lonely, silent Elf. I sat next to him, bought him a tankard of Ale, and asked him to tell me his story.

He sighed heavily, piteously, and was soon telling me that his name was Sapleaf, and that, in his younger days, he had a forbidden affair with a dwarven woman. It was only recently that he discovered he had a long-lost son, Grimwold by name. He had endeavoured to make himself known to Grimwold, but the Dwarf didn't want to know and told him to sod off.

He wasn't prepared for the rejection which he received, however, and he sat, alone and unfriended, regretting the instinct which had prompted him to attend; his dreams of a happy meeting with his only son now just a shattered, crushed, impossible dream.

Indeed, he informed me, since his Elfin wife died some two hundred years ago, life holds little meaning for him. Drinking his ale, he stood and declared that he would journey to the Forgotten Mountains and there battle the indigenous dragons until he either destroyed the race or was destroyed himself in the process.

With an icy, cold, determined glint in his eye, he stood, took his leave of me, and shuffled to the exit, cutting a lonely and solitary figure. No adventurer noticed his sad departure, and if truth be known, none would have missed his presence.

Adventuring Awards

The following were made to various adventurers who have made their mark in the Adventuring world. The title of Most Dogged Adventurer went to Edith Slaverstock, who finally managed to complete S.V.S. after twenty years of hard work.

The title of Dastest Adventurer 1994 was won by the somewhat peculiarly titled 'Delkin the Peculiar'. He spends his time campaigning for Dwarves to join his 'I hate Gold' campaign. His membership currently stands at one, but he is not deterred by this lack of interest. As he says, it takes time for new ideas to be accepted. The fact that he has been campaigning for fifteen years doesn't seem to daunt his enthusiasm.

The title of best adventure programmer went to Slabodan Cracklemush, whose 255,000 location maze took all of five minutes to program. Unfortunately, it appears that several hundred adventurers are stuck in the maze, and so were unable to attend the convention.

My colleague Kasar, himself unable to attend for other reasons, commented that he would have been in line for an award, if it hadn't been raining in Colchester, there wasn't an 'r' in the month, and if he'd ever managed to write a decent adventure.

Contrary to popular belief, the reclusive Glimwynd did attend, but was incognito, since his person (and more besides) had been the target for lots of hate mail and spiteful messages of late. It appears that the adventuring fraternity isn't the tough-skinned animal that it masquerades as being.

The most amusing moment in the entire evening was when Ellen Mahon decided to give all the assembled adventures a practical demonstration of how to cross the River Styx in Hades. Fortunately, this was purely a verbal demonstration, as even the most hardened adventurer quailed at the thought of anything more graphic.

In the next issue: Revealed, the story of Grimwold and the Bunny!



THE 1994 ADVENTURERS' CONVENTION AWARDS

Best Adventure

- 1st. Twelve Days of Christmas
- 2nd. Final Demand

Best New Author

- 1st. Sharon Harwood
- 2nd. Diane Rice
- 3rd. Marlon

Most Helpful Adventurer

- 1st. Barbara Gibb
- 2nd. Joan Pancott
- 3rd. Jenny Perry

Megapoints Competition

- 1st. Nancy Finnighan

Best Author

- 1st. Jack Lockerby
- 2nd. Steve Clay
- 3rd. Peter Clark

Best Software House

- 1st. Zenobi Software
- 2nd. WoW Software
- 3rd. Adventure Workshop

Best Playtester

- 1st. Loma Paterson
- 2nd. Terry Taylor
- 3rd. Sue Medley

Trivial Pursuit Challenge

- 1st. Southern Wonders
- 2nd. Northern Horde

My congratulations to everyone mentioned – the awards are very well deserved. I would also like to thank Vicky and David Jackson for the beautiful certificates, the same excellent design as last year, which, of course, simply couldn't be bettered.

John Wilson had asked that Zenobi be excluded from the awards and that the organizers of the Convention should disregard any votes for Zenobi Software on the grounds that they are a full-time organisation and not a "hobbyist" concern. Needless to say, I don't agree. The award is for the Best Software House and therefore there is no restriction on whom the voter wishes to nominate. The above awards are genuine because they have been chosen by the people who **buy** and/or **write** adventures!

However, John has also asked me to extend his thanks to all who voted for ZENOBI and their authors. Personally, I think he is secretly more than a little chuffed at the awards!! (Barbara)

Zenobi Software

THE BARDIC RITE

Every one of us has encountered a 'rival' .. albeit for something as simple as the last-remaining place in the school football or hockey team or the devoted attentions of the family pet. But LEOPOLD had a rival for something a tad more important and that rival was none other than TOMAS. For it was the time of the 'BARDIC RITE' and only he stood between LEOPOLD and his goal. Little was told of the 'RITE' apart from the fact that those who participated in it had to perform an 'original' tune on an instrument held in great esteem by the dwarven races ... none of the contestants ever spoke about it just in case a 'rival' overheard them and took their ideas for their own - such was the fierceness of the contest.

LEOPOLD, as was his way, had been fairly slack in his preparations for the 'RITE' and to date had not even managed to come up with some original music or an instrument to play it on ... but that was the least of his troubles because TOMAS was well prepared and if LEOPOLD did not get a move on TOMAS would win the contest without LEOPOLD ever doing anything about it.



Spectrum 128K

Sat on the edge of his bed like this LEOPOLD could not help but wonder just what exactly he was going to do --- the 'RITE' was today and he had nothing prepared --- surely TOMAS was going to walk away with the contest at this rate! LEOPOLD scratched his head and decided that the best thing he could do was to find himself some original music and an instrument to play it on - then with luck he might just be ready in time for the contest to begin. Oh how he dreaded the sound of the bell that would announce the start of the 'RITE'

adventure

NOTES

Your task is to assist LEOPOLD to locate some original music and also the instrument required to play it on ... after all, he was now an accomplished lute-player and he should be able to handle most other instruments. So guide him through the confines of a castle and discover just what there is that LEOPOLD can use to assist him on his quest to become 'NUMBER ONE'.

The game will recognise such commands as **SHOUT**, **PULL**, **LOOK** and **EXAMINE** as well as some more obscure ones such as **THROUGH** and **REPLACE**. Always use the standard verb/noun format when inputting commands and don't forget to include such things as **UNDER** and **OVER**. Use **RAHSAVE** and **RAHLOAD** to store/recall a position to and from **MEMORY** but always resort to the standard **SAVE** and **LOAD** in order to make a more permanent record to **TAPE** or **DISK**.

COMPETITION TIME

Just to prove that the 'play-testers' have more to think about than simple spelling mistakes, **TERRY TAYLOR** has suggested we have a small competition - mind you, he never volunteered to come up with the prize!! So the first **SIX** people to write in stating ..

- The deliberate mistake on the 'loading' screen.
- Where the 'clonk' is actually found
- Just what exactly a 'clonk' is and looks like - a 'stringed instrument of the dwarves' will not be enough. You need to state its shape and construction.

will all receive a **FREE** game of their own choosing .. compilations are included in this! Write your answers on a postcard and send them to .. 'TIGHT TERRY'S COMPETITION' Dept.1.



ADVENTURE

DRAGON - QUEST

Some dragons are bad and it is even rumoured that some dragons are good but in this kingdom the only 'good' dragon is a 'dead' dragon! Or so the local inhabitants would have you think. For they were the unfortunate ones who had to share their kingdom with one of the 'baddest' dragons of all times ... the infamous **SHADOOR**.

SHADOOR, the mightiest of dragons, had the nation in a grip of terror. Not only had he stolen the King's 'Staff-of-Office' but he was also doubling his demands in regards to the yearly tribute that was paid to him. This tribute (to use the word very loosely) was normally paid in gold but this time around **SHADOOR** wanted TWICE as much of the stuff as normal. Failure to agree to his demands could only lead to the destruction of all crops and the burning of many fine homes .. for this was always how it went when the demands of a dragon went unheeded! Not only that, but **SHADOOR** had vowed to do some totally 'unmentionable' things with several fair maidens of the kingdom.



Spectrum 48K/128K+2+

Naturally many brave men volunteered their services in an attempt to thwart **SHADOOR**'s plans, in fact **YOU** were one of the first to approach the King. However you were not considered to be a serious candidate for the position — lacking in moral fibre, were the words used some of the courtiers'. However all this was to change in the space of a few short weeks and you were ordered to appear in front of the King. It seemed that **YOU** were now the only able-bodied person left in the kingdom ... **SHADOOR** had disposed of all the others!!!

The King informs you that **YOU** are the last hope of the nation and that if **YOU** fail then the future would indeed be bleak. For there was simply not enough gold in the Treasury to satisfy the greed of **SHADOOR** and without that gold all would be lost. Glancing down at the floor the King mumbles something about **YOU** needing to return with the lost staff in order to prove you had defeated the beast and then shuffles away to leave you to embark upon your journey.

So with a brave face you set out the very next morning. You soon find yourself at the northern gateway — ahead lies uncharted territory. Your only possession being a cloak that the King had thrust into your hands before he shuffled off into the shadows



NOTES : The game will accept all the standard inputs such as **EXAMINE**, **LOOK**, **SAVE**, and **LOAD**. However it will also accept one or two more obscure commands **TRANSLATE**, **RIDE** and **LOOK BEHIND**. Use the command **PUT ALL INTO RUCKSACK** to save on space.

Whilst a routine to save your position to ram is included in the game it is advisable to save to tape or disk if you wish to keep a permanent record of your progress through the game.

Zenobi Software

ADVENTURES

ADVENTURE PROBE SOFTWARE

presents for the C64

ZARGO'S CASTLE

by Harold Dixon

Would you like to earn yourself 12 treasures, a mountain of gold coins and the deeds to the Castle?

Well, all you have to do is present the Baron with the six jewels so that he can restore the imperial coronet!

However, there are a few things between you and success, such as:-

booby traps and secret passages
secrets in the cellar

various characters who may help or hinder your progress
an assortment of chairs to sit in with surprising results
a dragon to defeat (what is a castle without a dragon?)
a transporter to find and operate for those useful "short cuts"
plus many more interesting puzzles.

Written with the GAC+, this massive adventure is in five "sections", each one accessed automatically when you enter certain locations, and therefore available on DISC only.

Price: £3 (payable to Adventure Probe) from:

Adventure Probe Software

52 Burford Road

Liverpool, L16 6AQ

THE TAXMAN COMETH

At last the Taxman has made his way to the Amiga.

This is a true AMIGA game and not an emulation!

A text adventure in the classic tradition with enough brain-blending puzzles to keep you busy for hours!



- * Can you deal with Phoebe's staircase?
- * Or how about a determined dwarf?
- * Try out the infamous moving blocks!
- * Work your way out of Halfpint's dumbwaiter!
- * All this and more awaits!

The Taxman Cometh is available for the Amiga
for only **£3.00** (including p&p) from

Steve Clay,
17 Stanlaw Road,
Ellesmere Port,
South Wirral,
L65 0EY

(Cheques/p.o. payable to S.J.Clay)

The Adventure Workshop

Adventures for the Commodore C64

BORED OF THE RINGS by FERGUS McNEILL

The first and original send up of the Tolkien classic 'Lord of the Rings' meet all the old characters in guises you've never seen them before. Guide Fordo and his merry band of Boggit friends, Spam, Pimpily and Murky through the realms of Muddle Earth on the mission of great importance set upon them by the wizard Grandalf.

Three Part Adventure on Tape or Disc £3.00

THE VERY BIG CAVE ADVENTURE from ST BRIDES

Trixie the St Brides School Prefect will be your guide to this hilarious send up of the classic Crowther Woods Cave adventure. The idea is the same, to collect all the treasures and return them to the building at the start but this time your way is hindered by puzzles nothing like the ones you met up with in the original adventure. Even getting into the building at the start is more of a problem than it first seems.

Two Part Adventure on Tape or Disc £2.50

BUGSY from ST BRIDES

It is an ordinary evening in the common room at St Bride's. In one corner a quiet game of poker is in progress, while at a little table Trixie Trinian is writing about her adventures in the Very Big Caves in the hope of selling them to a Sunday paper. Suddenly the door bursts open and a rabbit staggers in. It is pale blue, three feet tall and as cute as they build 'em. It is bleeding from a gunshot wound.

"Da name's Buggy," says the rabbit. "Buggy Maroon. I wanted to take over da Chicago mobs but I blew it. It's all over now. I'm hurt bad. I'm gonna die."

"Rubbish," says Trixie. "All you need is someone to guide you from their computer keyboard and you'll achieve your aims in no time at all."

Two Part Adventure on Tape or Disc £2.50

ARNOLD THE ADVENTURER by SCOTT DENYER

Arnold the well know Super Hero and all time good guy reads the message from his old pal Winthorpe the Wizard. Winthorpe's fabled 'Crystal of Conrad' has been stolen by the evil Schwartze and Arnold has been asked to retrieve it before Schwartze can use it to dispose of Arnolds old pal. The Crystal is somewhere in Schwartze Mansion and Winthorpe is staying in hiding until you aid Arnold in finding it.

Single Part Adventure on Tape or Disc £2.00

The Adventure Workshop, 36 Grasmere Road, Royton, Oldham, Lancashire.
OL2 6SR. Please make Cheques/Postal orders payable to P.M. Reynolds

SOMA Pt.14 by ARCHIE FICHALL

The long tiring journey through the dark mines of Richesse was a nightmare Oda thought would never end. Gor was right behind her, breathing heavily, urging them to go faster and she was sure, with every step, he was going to tread on her heels and she would fall and be trampled to death. After she had stumbled a few times, the Traveller reached out and took her hand and she felt much more secure in his strong, sure grip. Zmel led the way unerringly through the bewildering labyrinth of passages, until at last the tunnel widened into a fair-sized cave.

In the middle of the cave floor was a deep, crater-like depression, and at the bottom of the deep basin lay thousands of small rocks. The rocks were black and shiny, with bands of fiery red running through them and at the sight of them, Gor walked to the edge of the basin and hissed triumphantly. The Traveller, who was watching Gor carefully, suddenly let go of Ode's hand and hurled himself at the lizard. Gor, taken unawares, lost his balance on the edge of the basin, clutched at the Traveller for support and both of them plunged into the basin, but instead of the crunch of stones Oda expected to hear, there was a loud splash and nipples spread across the surface of what was in fact a deep pool of water so crystal clear and still that Oda hadn't even seen it.

The Traveller and Gor struggled in the water, rolling over and over until the Traveller managed to escape from Gor's clutches and swam swiftly to the side of the pool. Gor, floundering and thrashing in the water was in trouble. His body, immersed in the strong solution of cave water was on fire and being unable to swim, his struggles took him under the water again and again. Oda turned away from the distressing struggles, which soon became weaker and weaker and then they stopped altogether.

"Now, for the other one," said the Traveller to Zmel. "Take me to the rock fall."

"There is no rock fall," admitted Zmel. "I led him to a deep hole and my father pushed him in."

"Rika's alive?"

"Very much so!" A figure detached itself from a dark shadow at the back of the cave and came over to them. He held out his hand to the Traveller. "I'm Rika. The people of Richesse and the other villages are in your debt, stranger. Zmel has told me all you have done for us. How can we repay you?"

"Repayment is not necessary. The Lirium is safe now, until the next time."

"The Ancient Ones will be grateful to you, one day."

"The Ancient Ones aren't coming back, Rika," said the Traveller. "The Lirium is yours now, to use as you wish. It is very powerful. Other worlds, more advanced than this one, use it to travel to distant stars. You could sell it and your world would become rich. Not all races are evil like the Tarosaurs, other will treat you fairly and pay you well for the Lirium."

"Did the Ancient Ones send you?" asked Rika. "Why do they not return... but," he was instantly contrite, "you need dry clothes. I am failing badly in my duty as a host. Come with me." After a few more twists and turns in the dark passages, Rika led the way into a small cave, which had all the signs of recent occupancy. "This is my underground home, I will give you clothes until your own are dry and I'll make a hot meal to warm you."

After a bowl of nourishing stew, Ode wandered round the cave and wondered why she felt

so odd; light-headed and strangely detached from reality, it was like being in a dream. The cave walls, when she looked at them seemed to recede and become thinner and then she could see right through them. Rika and the Traveller were talking but their voices seemed oddly muted and her legs, when she stood up, were very slow to respond. At the far side of the cave, Oda came to a little door of rock, covered in runes. As she stared at the runes, it seemed as if someone was walking through the closed door towards her, but as if from a great distance – some ethereal being all in white, someone she could see right through. Voices were whispering but whispering words that were unfamiliar. She started to sway. Immediately the Traveller was beside her, back in his own familiar clothes again and taking her elbow, he led her to a low bed. He smiled and seemed to be saying something, but his words were slow and didn't make sense. Looking at Rika, he pointed to the runes on the door.

"What do they say?"

"Way of no return," said Rika. "I do not know what lies beyond. No one has opened the door in my lifetime, or in my father's lifetime."

Reaching out, the Traveller touched the strange symbols carved into the rock, pressing his finger into each one in turn. Suddenly there was a soft click and the rock door swung open, turning smoothly on a central pivot. Immediately there was a rush of cool air into the stuffy little cave. Taking a torch from a wall bracket, the Traveller stepped through the door into the darkness beyond. Zmel tried to follow, but Rika held him back. The Traveller, holding aloft the torch, beheld a strange sight. He was standing inside a small, square rock chamber. Three of the walls were familiar red rock, but the fourth wall was a solid black, reflecting no light at all. However much he stared at it, he just couldn't seem to see it. Reaching out a tentative hand, he tried to touch the blackness, but his hand disappeared. Startled, he withdrew it again. Oda appeared beside him.

"What is it?" she managed to say, struggling to bring her mind into focus.

"I think it's where the Ancient Ones went – a time portal – a door into another time." Once again he reached out his hand and it vanished into the blackness. He stepped forward and the blackness swallowed up the whole of his arm and his foot. He put his head through the blackness and Oda heard him gasp. The torch dropped to the ground and all that was left of the Traveller was one arm and a hand and they were disappearing through the strange black curtain of nothingness.

"No..." Oda shouted in a strange voice that she hardly recognized as her own, "don't go – Daak – come back." Stumbling forward, she ran and grabbed the hand just before it vanished into the unknown and then the blackness swallowed her too.

Rika and Zmel peeped through the door, just in time to see Oda run and disappear into the blackness. Zmel leapt forward, but Rika held him firmly. "No, my son, they have gone to join the Ancient Ones, from which there is no return. We will close the door and we will tell no one of this, do you understand?"

Zmel nodded numbly and the two closed the ancient door once again.

Once through the wall of blackness the light was blinding, the fresh air invigorating. Oda's head cleared immediately. Of the door, there was no sign. Still holding the Traveller's hand, she stared round in amazement at the unfamiliar sights.

"Where are we?" she gasped.

THE END? OR SIMPLY THE BEGINNING?

PROGRAMMING WITH AMOS Pt.4 by STEVE CLAY

First off this month is a note to AMOS 1.3 users. There seems to be a slight glitch with the ADVSHELL and BT listings. It appears that AMOS 1.3 requires you to put brackets around each statement in an OR statement and also that ELSE must be on its own line;

Examples:

```
Until (COUNT=0) or (ANS="" ) or (TEST=0)
```

```
  If QS="Y"
```

```
    Print "Yes!"
```

```
  Else
```

```
    Print "No!";End If
```

This month I'll give you the basics regarding containers. If you have played the BT game then you will have come across the toolchest in the quarters. As you will know you need to examine this chest to obtain the crowbar. However any attempt to put objects into the chest will be ignored. This was done on purpose so that I could show you how to implement a container via the tutorials.

The best way to handle containers is to include two new pieces of code above the normal Take/Drop routines. This way not only does it stop you spending ages debugging it, it is also easier to see what's going on.

You need to set aside a location for the inside of the container. This can have a text description if your player is able to climb inside but in this case there is no need. For this example location 8 will be the inside of the toolchest.

```
Rem **** Take obj From Container ****
```

```
If VE-13 and PREP-3 and N2-11 and LOC-3:REM ** 11 is the noun 'toolchest'
```

```
If F(1S)=0: Print "The toolchest is closed!"; Return: End If
```

```
For N=0 to 30
```

```
  If OBW(N)=N1
```

```
    If COBL(N)=8:COBL(N)=254:Print OBJ$(N);":Taken!"; Return: End If
```

```
    Print "That isn't in the toolchest!"; Return: End If
```

```
  Next N: Print "There isn't one in the toolchest!"; Return: End If
```

The first line checks the input basically for the mention of toolchest and the preposition From. The next line checks that the chest is open. If not the player is told and the program jumps back for the next input. Next the program loops through the object word values 'OBW()' in search of N1. If it finds it a check is made on the current location of the object 'COBL()'. If it is in the toolchest i.e. at location 8 then the player takes it. If it isn't then the player receives a message saying so. If the value in N1 doesn't appear as an object the routine drops out to the final message.

```

REM **** Put obj into Container ****
If VE-14 and PREP-4 and N2-11 and LOC-3
If F(15)=0:Print "The toolchest is closed!" Return End if
For N=0 to 30
If OBW(N)=N1
If COBL(N)=LOC or COBL(N)=254
Print "I have put it in the toolchest!" COBL(N)=8:Return End if
Print "There isn't one here!":Return:End if
Next N
Print "I can't manage that at the moment!" Return: End if

```

This routine is much the same as that for taking objects out. The only major difference is that a check is made for the object in the players inventory as well as at the current location. A check could also be made to see if the player is wearing the object or LOC=253

You will need now to alter the examine commands referring to the toolchest. You need to add a small loop that scans the object location table COBL() for any objects at location 8

```

If VE-15 and N1-11 and LOC-3
If F(15)=0: Print "It is closed!" Return: End if
Print "The toolchest is open. Inside I can see;"
OBT=0: REM **** In case there is nothing in there
For N=0 to 30
If COBL(N)=8: Print OBJ$(N):OBT=1:End if
NEXT N
If OBT=0: Print "Nothing at all!": End if
Return: End if

```

All Print statements in the above examples would be exchanged for messages and sent to the PRM routine. I hope you can follow the above and if you feel confident why not try writing similar routines for the crate or how about Put all into toolchest or Take all from toolchest?

A FEW PLAYING TIPS by KEITH BURNARD

I always start a game by checking my inventory as some authors don't tell you that you are carrying something(s) at the start of a game

I then check to see if there is any response to "HELP" and "WAIT" If you get the cop out "I didn't understand that" or words to that effect then you know that the program does not recognize that word. A response of something on the lines of "Time passes" may mean that somewhere in the game you may have to wait a while for something to happen.

Finding the right input can sometimes be difficult but I find that by sticking to simple words sometimes gets you a response. For instance "THROW" is better than "CHUCK" or "TOSS".

An input of "KILL MONSTER" may get you the response "HOW?" or "WITH WHAT?". This is OK but in a count routine this could be fatal. Try "THROW SPEAR" or if the program recognizes more than a verb-noun input, then "THROW SPEAR AT MONSTER" or "KILL MONSTER WITH SPEAR".

If there is a tree in the location don't always assume that it is for climbing. It may contain some fruit that you need or even a branch. There may be something you need to check regarding the trunk of the tree (maybe a hole or there may even be something behind the tree).

If you are in a room with a desk then examine desk. If you are told "It is completely clear of any items but contains a drawer" then naturally the drawer needs investigating. In fact anything mentioned in the text should be EXAMINED and SEARCHED (if search is recognized by the program). You could even try removing the drawer as it may contain something stuck underneath it, or it could be used to stand on to reach something.

You could be in a room with a door to the north. The door is open. This could mean two things - 1) The door is open so that you can go north from the room without opening the door, 2) On the other hand by closing the door you may find something hanging on a peg behind it.

You could find some bread and eat it or give it to someone in exchange for something else. If you do this you may find that you are becoming hungry later on in the game. The answer to this one would be to share the bread.

Some items may have to be used in a certain order. For instance a knife, an apple and a locked drawer. Cutting the apple in half first may be essential, for if you use the knife to force the drawer open it may result in the knife breaking.

A dustbin could be searched for an item or if large enough you could hide in it, or look behind it.

In some games "LOOK" will only redescribe the location. Other utilities use "look" for "LOOK UNDER, BEHIND SOMETHING", "R" or "REDESCRIBE" is used to clear the screen and reprint the location.

Do not always assume that objects you find are only used for the purpose for which they were made. You would normally fill a bottle with something, maybe water, wine or poison, but it could be used as a weapon. If you break the bottle you could use a piece of the glass to deflect strong light to start a fire or maybe dazzle someone or something.

Adventures are full of cunning plays by most authors. You think that you are doing fine, finding objects easily, using them, only to find that you have used them for the wrong reasons.

Adventuring is pitting your wits against the author's.

I can only say that the more games that you play will give you more clues to what you are meant to do. But even then you will still find it a challenge.

After all, that is the fun of adventuring! Good luck.

[One of the most frequent questions from new adventurers is "How do you map a game?" We all end up with our own method, but would anyone like to share their tips? - Barbara]

PERSONAL

- To Peter - I enjoyed my six of the best (The Addict)
To Steve - Be careful where you whip it out, don't frighten the horses (M.S.-P)
To Rudi - I'll take it, sure you can manage with just the other three (Wynne)
To Fluffy and Shery - Typecast huh! (Wynne)
To Peter - Did you really leave something in your room (Wynne)
To Ellen - And I just DON'T believe you were so desperate (Wynne)
To Damien - Honest, Ellen said you weren't expected to arrive until Saturday! (Wynne)
To all at the Convention '94 - Great to see you, let's do it again in '95 (Wynne)
To Med Cat - It's the other 50% that I'm worried about (Uncle Horace)
To Doc - So, Conan can count on you, eh? Pity you always came bottom of the class in maths, isn't it? (Uncle Horace)
To East Anglian Admirer - What do you mean, "Have I got my fingers crossed?" Of course not! Ouch (Uncle Horace)
To Grimwold - This mine's yours! (Uncle Horace)
To Damien - Any ideas as to where I can buy a chin wig? (Uncle Horace)
To Damien - He's still not a pretty sight! (Ellen)
To Margaret and Michael Crewdson - Arrived home safely, (Tuesday) via Lands End and the Isle of Men; guess who was navigating? (Ellen)
To M. Polo - O.K. I'll take care of the "Dead" bit, if you can handle the "Warg" (Ellen)
To Phill - H-E-L-P! The air's getting pretty thin in here (Ellen)
To Peter - I went all the way back, and broke the coconut (Ellen)
To Tinkerbelle - How'd you end up in Germany? Get yourself lost in the Revolving Woods, did you? (Ellen)
To Med Cat - Who asked you for your opinion? Don't go poking your whiskers in where they're not wanted, or you could be very sorry! (The Witch of Stanley)
To Tweepwold - So that's where you keep your courage, in your nuggets! (The Witch of Stanley)
To Grimwold - Now I know why you're sending others to do your dirty work. Scared of losing your own nuggets, eh? Well, if I were you, I'd keep a tight hold on them, just in case (The Witch of Stanley)
To Tweepwold - First you grovel to Gnmmy, then you run snivelling to him, you're a disgrace to our race! (Doc)
To Uncle Horace - My eyes are fine, all four of them (Doc)
To Tweepwold - Don't worry about your back, I'll soon make that feel better. And I've got enough "Hi's", not to mention, "Ho's" for the pair of us (Snow White)
To M. Polo - Loved your message to Mr D about the "apacabar", erm, how tall are you? (Snow White)
To Phill - Right! That's it! I'm off to the C.A.B. office, first thing in the morning (Loobloo)

WOULDN'T IT BE NICE IF..... by DOROTHY MILLARD

Wouldn't it be nice if all adventure maps started in the top left hand corner.

Wouldn't it be nice if adventures didn't turn into word searches.

Wouldn't it be nice if all adventures contained the same abbreviations.

AMIGA NEWS by STEVE CLAY

Black Dawn 2: I mentioned recently that Black Dawn had been revamped and was available as Black Dawn Special edition. However I have now seen a review of Black Dawn 2. This is a completely new game, with a new layout and improved game graphics. The control mechanism remains unaltered and the same simple yet compelling gameplay remains. With this latest version though you only get the first ten missions. You will need to register to receive the further twenty missions. I should think this is one game for which most players will register!

Earlier this year I mentioned a PC game that was due to be ported across to the Amiga called 'Flight of the Amazon Queen'. This has resurfaced with much hype in a preview that concentrates on the CD version with its soundtrack having the most said about it, which to my cynical eye, hints that the game may not be the most exciting. There is an all star cast providing the characters voices including, it says here, Penelope Keith and a bloke from Star Wars. The floppy versions have none of the joys(!!) that Mrs Keith and co. provide and it is likely that this could well be an improvement. 32 colours are used in the 500, 600 versions and 64 colours are on the AGA machines.

Dreamweb, a demo of which was enjoyed by our erstwhile editor last month, is to be released with an 18 certificate because of 'scenes of sex and violence'. The naughty bits include two sprites doing rumpy on a bed but to see this clearly you need a bloody good magnifying glass...ahem... at least so I am told. Now anyone suggesting that the use of an 18 certificate is nothing more than the tried and tested trick of using the BBFC as a marketing ploy would be a very untrusting person indeed.

Crystal Dragon is a 3D dungeon game from Black Legend and looks to have been inspired by Black Crypt and Dungeon Master. The game is being coded by Magnetic Fields and looks rather good. There is a claim from the producers that there will be more emphasis on puzzles than is the norm in games of this sort.

Having mentioned King of Thieves by Team 17 it appears the self-same chappies are in the process of coding another graphic adventure using the above-and-behind viewpoint as used in the Chaos Engine and Dragonstone. The working title is Witchwood and there are apparently going to be lots of puzzles and lots of interaction. Looking at the screenshots I am for some reason reminded of Level 9's Ingrid games but I can't for the life of me work out why.

Another game mentioned in a past issue is Robinsons Requiem. The story behind the game is a simple one. You are put into a wilderness and your aim is to escape by solving puzzles. The graphics are not given many accolades but the gameplay seems to be excellent. The whole thing apparently moves a little sluggishly so speed merchants might want to try before they buy.

[There is a bit of space at the bottom of the page so I'd like to say that I won't let the 18 certificate put me off if ever Dream Web is released. So far I've avoided all the hype of the commercial games, my knowledge being restricted to what I have read in Steve's excellent column. With only the demo disc to go on, I didn't know the storyline of Dream Web, but it seemed to be a very neat bit of programming, cutting out unnecessary movement - what is known as user-friendly. One last comment from me. Steve sent in his contributions on MSDOS Amiga disc which saved me a lot of typing. Thank you Steve - Barbars]

NEWSDESK

More games from Adventure Probe Software

Mission X, Mansion Quest, Pyramid, Desert Island and Castle Adventure are now available for the Amiga (under Spectrum emulation) on a compilation disc. Price, £7.50. They are, of course, also available separately and as a collection for the C64 on disc and tape - see advert. in the August '94 issue for details.

Twenty-two (yes, 22) of Jack Lockerby's games for the C64 are now available from Probe. Hammer of Gimmold, Mutant Domes of Sha, Bounty Hunter, Miser, Jade Necklace, Cup, Realm of Darkness, Enchanted Cottage, Lifeboat, Matchmaker, Jack & the Beanstalk, Challenge, Witch Hunt, Davy Jones Locker, Into the Mystic, Treasure Island (2 pts.) Dark Tower, Mines of Lithiad, Escaping Habit, Ellinore Diamond and Theme Park UK. On tape and disc, price £2 each, except Treasure Island which is £2.50.

Soft Options

This hobby-turned-small-business specializes in supplying secondhand software and hardware for the "older" computers: Sinclair ZX & Spectrum; Amstrad CPC; Commodore 64, +4, C16, VIC 20; BBC & Acom Electron; Toshiba MSX; Dragon 32; ORIC 1; etc. Most of the games are 50p. (including some adventures), some boxed games a little more. It is run by Eddie and Arthur who will try to obtain those "hard-to-find" items for you. See inside back cover for address.

PC/Spectrum Emulator

Phil Glover has informed me that the full version, with all the frills such as altering the running speed in Spectrum mode, the ability to transfer and run Plus D or Disciple snapshots, etc. is available from B.G. Services, 64 Roebuck Road, Chessington, Surrey, KT9 1JX. Price £15.

Computer Sales & Wants

It is with deep regret that I have to announce that Debby Howard's bi-monthly magazine has ceased publication due to lack of support. She says it was a struggle to fill the pages of the magazine, even after an extensive advertising campaign. She is working on another project at the moment - I hope to have further details next month.

Visualize Software

This company, run by Jon Wells, is busy revamping Clive Wilson's adventures for the C64. In fact he seems to be putting a few new animated pictures at the beginning of the adventures but leaving the game itself alone, judging by the "new" version of ZZZZ that I have seen. A review of this and Treasure Isle by Jon Wells will be published soon. Clive wrote to me just after I bought the latter and was sent the former on the other side of the disc. Clive tells me that Kobayashi Naru, Demigod and The Darkest Road are due out shortly. Se-Kaa of Assiah should be ready for Christmas, and the rest of the games will be released next year - they are Shard of Inovar, Venom, Nightwing, Micro Drivin', The Magus (hope it has been checked for bugs!) and Majik. For details send SAE to 9 De Grey Road, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE30 4PH.

HELP WANTED

I am playing **SORDERON'S SHADOW** on the Spectrum, and although the booklet tells you a lot about the background, it doesn't help you with the gameplay. Does anyone know what it is all about? Any help will be appreciated.

Please phone Dennis on 0904 489142

★

Re: **BARD'S TALE II**, Snare #4, PLEASE, what on earth do I say to the Thirsty Mouth who asks me: "Tell me the value of rota actions"? The snare is found on the third level of the Maze of Dread. Have I missed an important clue, or am I just being thick?

Please contact Ingrid Solberg, 11 Ashleigh Grove, West Jesmond, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE2 3DJ.

★

I would be grateful for help on the following games, all on the PC.

HUMBUG - How do you leave the waiting room? I know that you have to go through the room to catch the bus and that you must talk to the Viking but cannot leave the room.

JACARANDA JIM - How do you remove the dragon from the canteen in the zoo?

MAROONED AGAIN - I think I am near the end of the game but I need an I.D. to move the platform or do I need to disabled the camera?

ULTIMA 5 - The numbers on my keyboard do not work in the game except for the 5 key. Also my party does not advance in levels though I know they should have by now. Does anybody know what might be causing the problems? I have a 386/33.

WHAT PERSONAL COMPUTER : THE ADVENTURE - How do you get the sandwich from the lunchbox of the London Underground guard? Any help will be appreciated.

Please contact Richard Batey, 84 Sycamore road South, Sebastopol, Pontypool, Gwent, NP4 5AW. Tel: 0495 752727.

IN TOUCH

WANTED - Having had most of my notes and maps destroyed, and some of my games, can anyone help with the following SPECTRUM adventures, either for loan or sale? COLOSSAL, EMERALD ISLE, RED MOON, KNIGHTS QUEST (Phipps), FOREST AT THE WORLDS END, FUNHOUSE, BRIAN THE BOLD, MISER, TEMPLE TERROR, GOLDEN APPLE, GOLDEN CHALICE, JEWELS OF BABYLON, QUEST (Hewson), VALKYRIE 17, ROBIN OF SHERLOCK 1-3, ACORNS QUEST, VERY BIG CAVE 1&2, SEABASE DELTA, QUEST FOR ETERNITY, TWIN KINGDOM VALLEY, SORCERER OF CLAYMORGUE CASTLE, IN SEARCH OF ANGELS. Please contact Karen Tyars, 39 Danetree Road, West Ewell, Surrey, KT19 9SA. Tel: 081 394 1261

OBJECTS AND THEIR USES

FANTASTIC ADVENTURE played on an Amstrad

- Skeletons red herring
- Teeth of victims give to wizard for brass key
- Sword give to guard so you can enter fort
- Spell use to be transported to Paradise
- Sacred talisman needed when in presence of Supreme Being
- Brass Key opens door to ancient building
- Pick use to lever door and move rocks
- Stone relief push and turn orb
- Boat cross the lake in it
- Rope use to cross pit
- Potion give to witch for charm
- Elixir give to Tharl for the copper key
- Vial red herring
- Gold coin drop it down well
- Supreme Being take the treasures to him
- Stone slab examine it to find the bronze key
- Amulet protects you against dragon, then give to Gaal chief for steel key
- Steel key opens door in ant-chamber in keep
- Large key opens door to cell in dungeon
- Copper key opens door to secret laboratory
- Rusty key opens door to temple
- Bronze key opens chest in east tower of fort
- Charm protects you against the Troll king
- Zelba the wizard has the brass key
- Dragon won't harm you if you are protected
- "Crown segment" treasure
- "Golden orb" treasure
- "Silver sceptre" treasure

GETTING YOU STARTED

THE AXE OF KOLT (128K) played on a Spectrum & Amstrad

You start on a dry dusty road west of the village of Hengemire. I, X SIGNPOST, READ NOTICE (tells you about the market), E, E, E, E (catch sight of something or someone moving in trees), LOOK E (outlaws waiting to ambush anyone using the road), W, S (by church), S, SEARCH GRASS (now have a brass clapper), E (coming here triggers the arrival of the brewer's dray at the inn), W, N, NW, NW (by inn, should see the dray in the yard), NW, HELP LANDLORD, TALK LORNA (she mentions a pass through the mountains), ASK LORNA ABOUT "PASS", ASK LORNA ABOUT "DWARK" (comes out at night - the trapper can tell you more), X BEAM, W (by fireplace), X TAPESTRY (depicts warrior wielding double-headed axe and fighting lizardman), E (a traveller enters with the news that the Xixon have returned and that the King has asked for a volunteer to find the fabled Axe of Kolt). If the traveller doesn't appear, go W then return E until he does. E, N (fork in track), NW, W (dragon flies out of a cave, it is fairly friendly and only wants you to remind him of his name), SAY "ZORAK" (the name on the beam in the inn), W, X BELL (clapper missing), FIT CLAPPER (the one found in the graveyard), RING BELL (door opens), W, U, TELL MAGOR ABOUT "XIXON" (he is upset, and when you tell him you intend to find the Axe of Kolt he gives you a bag of gold so that you can equip yourself for the task), X BAG, LOOK IN BAG (10 coins), D, E (slab rolls back into place), E, SE, D (north side of green), S, X STALLS (not yet set up), NW, W (inside inn), BUY ALE (costs 1 gold coin), E (if you bought ale the market is now open), E, TALK TO LAMPMAKER, BUY LAMP (costs 1 gold coin), BUY TINDERBOX (also costs 1 gold coin), X LAMP (empty), ASK LAMPMAKER ABOUT "OIL" (told oil vendor due soon), S (middle of village green by stone cross), WAIT



SOUTH AMERICAN TREK played by Richard Batey on a PC

GET RAFT, S, S, L, READ PAPER, DROP PAPER, W, GET MATCHES, S, W, GET BAUXITE, W, N, W, W, GO TRADING POST, READ SIGN, GIVE BAUXITE (given torch), N, W, S, S, S, E, S, W, S, LIGHT TORCH

SHIMMERKIN played on a Spectrum

Start in cage. EXAM CAGE (stone with metal bars), EXAM BARS (one is loose), TAKE BAR (gap to east), E (room occupied by a wizard, an elf and a guard), TALK ELF, KILL ELF (need bar), E (store-room), TAKE GOLD, W, TALK GUARD, WAIT, WAIT (you hear a yawning sound), R (guard is asleep), KILL GUARD (need bar), DROP BAR, TALK WIZARD, S (circular room), NW (prison cell), N (kitchen), TAKE LOAF, W (chef's lair), N (corner stone), E (hallway), EXAM TILES (loose), BREAK TILES, TAKE KNIFE, W, S, E, S, SE, SW (savage's lair), GIVE LOAF (given a scroll), EXAM SCROLL, READ SCROLL (your quest), DROP SCROLL, NE, S (wizard's lair), EXAM BOOKCASE (volume 7 is missing), N, E (Elfin's lair), KILL ELFIN (need knife), DROP KNIFE, SE, NE (draughty room), OPEN GRILL, W (small tight room), TAKE AXE (note it is blunt), NE (Mutant's lair), TALK MUTANT (he can help you).....



HINTS AND TIPS

THE ADVENTURER played on an Atari

Water the garden by the door of the church, then water yourself – to the amusement of the grave-digger, which gives you an opportunity to grab the spade.

The key to the cupboard is behind a panel in the vestry. The cupboard contains a block, a spill and a bible.

Once you can see what is inside the bell, blow to get it out.

To find the mermaid, jump north from rock to rock. Give her something and she will help you reach the cave entrance.

COLOUR OF MAGIC PL 1 played by Karen Tyers on a Spectrum

In the first location, STAND UP before you do anything.

Say hello to Twoflower. Translate for Twoflower, then accept.

Drop the cat in the saucer of milk. Press lever on iconograph when asked.

Turn round slowly when told to. Examine luggage after Twoflower vanishes.

CRYSTALS OF KINGS PL 1 played on a Spectrum (also Amiga & PC under emulation)

Find a rod and bait, then go fishing for "gold".

The fishing rod can be made into another object.

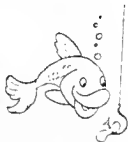
Use the coffin as a boat (CLIMB IN) and the spade as an oar.
(ROW)

Get caught when you approach the Orc camp? You have to disguise yourself so that you look exactly like an Orc.

Drink the potion when at the edge of the shallow pool, then wait until you fall into the water. It makes you younger so don't dawdle. You need to find a crystal.

Give the flute to the shepherd. When on the ledge, fire the arrow. It hits a goat and the bird swoops after it, allowing you a few moves to find something.

The salt stops the slug. You'll need a "tool" to break the ice to get the fourth (yellow) crystal to complete part one.



FANTASIA DIAMOND played by Richard Batey on a Spectrum

Ask the Robot to open the manhole for you.

Rub the glass to smash the window.

Knock on the library door.

Ask Bons to pull the lever.

To open the trapdoor keep hitting it with the baton.

BLACK CRYPT played by Mary Scott-Parker on an Amiga

4th Fork Key (continued from last month)

24.16 Enter haze, then turn and kill weapon pincher.

06.04 Put special waterskin in altar: repeat with others

10.02 Get eyes of True Sight

09.04 Enter haze

22.18 Go up stairs

Level 3 - 27.15 Put eyes on gold face

27.14 From 27.12 F RR FF LL FF RR FF LLLL FF RR

27.03 Get Mask of True Sight + Cult of Magic

26.18 Magic User must wear Mask. Click on bottom right square so that it is yellow, showing that he is the leader. You should now see the monsters in the room

17.21 Open gate

17.19 Get Level 15 Scroll of Dispelling [keep safe]

07.21 Open gate

07.19 Get Level 15 Scroll of Dispelling [keep safe]

12.12 Use Level 15 Scroll of Dispelling on haze

12.08 Use Level 15 Scroll of Dispelling on haze

12.07 Get Level 15 Glyph Scroll [use on 28.02.4 Skull Glyph]

12.07 Get Wizard word + Red Key [for door at 27.21.3]

The area behind the Skull Glyph at 28.02.4

Level 3 - 27.20 Open door with Red key

27.23 Go down the stairs

Level 4 - 01.29 Go down the stairs

Level 5 - 01.08 Go down the stairs

Level 6 - 09.08 Wait here and kill monster

09.14 Use Remove Glyph spell on Glyph

05.18 It is necessary to put the sun key and the moon key into this face to open up the stairs to Level 10. There are two teleports - one goes to Level 7 [blue level] and one goes to Level 9 [red level]. The moon key is on Level 7 and the sun key is on Level 9. They can be done in any order.

08.20 Enter teleport

Level 7 - [Need 3 Gold Keys for Moon Key]

13.15 Face south end wait until wall disappears

13.13 Face south and press little button [moves pillar at 16.13]

18.14 Open gate

16.17 Wait and kill monster

16.22 Step onto floor studs [sets off cold trap]

19.22 Wait and kill 4 monsters

22.22 Reverse onto floor studs [summons monster]

20.16 Reverse onto floor studs. Weapons left at 20.16. Summons monster, so have spells ready

18.18 Push lever [opens door at 22.19]

23.15 Get manual of the Planes + Gold Key

16.17 Go down stairs

Level 8 - 19.03 Face S end push little button, wait at 20.03 opens, monster inside

19.01 Scroll of Detection

18.04 Go up the stairs

(more next month)



DRAGON QUEST played by Wynne Snowdon on a Spectrum (also on Amiga & PC under emulation)

You need to find a spade as soon as possible.
A book will show you the way across the desert.
The owl likes to hunt his own food
Get rid of the evidence before trying to leave the inn.
A soft landing can save your life in the tunnels.
You'll need the rope more than once
You can have a swinging time in the tunnels.
Elbow grease will help you defeat the dragon.



FABLED BLACK ROSE played on a Spectrum (also Amiga under emulation)

Drop the snake in the net in the location where you originally found the net - it should get rid of the Harpy. Now EMILS BUR to reveal an exit to the east leading to the room where the Griffin is imprisoned.

Say hello then NIFFIRG KCOLNU (need bronze key from gnome) to be rewarded with a spell.

Dig on the west bank of the river to find a winged helmet, which with the spell will enable you to reach a fortress in the clouds.

Blow the horn for one of the feathers to fall off the helmet.

Hide three items in your pocket before trying to enter the fortress - don't be shy, and don't take no for an answer, you need to be locked in the dungeon.



HOUNDS OF HELL Pt.1 played by John Schofield on a (128K only) Spectrum and Amstrad

At the hotel, ring the bell, ask for a room and sign the register.

Ask the old man about the dogs before everyone goes to bed.

All the rest must be done *after* bedtime.

The TV Aerial can be used to pick the padlock.

There's a glass behind the bar and a key behind the desk.

The Ouija board from the attic fits on the library table. Finger on the glass on board will reveal some global coordinates.

In the barn find a bottle and a rag. Use the bottle like a lens when the sun comes up - then burn the rope with the lit rag.

INDIANA JONES/FATE OF ATLANTIS played by Neil Currie on an Amiga

Algiers

Go to Omar, talk to him and show him the Sunstone.

Trade the mask to Omar for anything and then try to trade the grocer for food.

The grocer will probably tell you he doesn't like the colour of the item you are offering. Trade Omar for a differently-coloured item and try the grocer again until you find out the colour. Go between Omar and the grocer until you can get the food.

Give the food to the beggar for balloon tickets.

Cut the rope on the balloon to be free.

Balloon

Land at every oasis and nomad camp then question the people and show them the map until you find the dig site.

ISHAR 2 played by Ron Rainbird on an Amiga 500

THE FINAL TREK

Having killed the Dragon (I hope), go North, looking at all recesses which could contain treasures, etc. Eventually you should reach a further crossroads. Keep heading North until you spot a secret passage in the North wall. Go down this passage until you enter a maze. This will need careful mapping as there are loads of invisible doors, but I've known many worse mazes than this so keep going. At the end of the maze you will see a lever which you should pull and then go back to the crossroads. Now go South until you come to a room with spikes. These you will need to carefully negotiate, but keep going and you will reach the Fortress. Now, move around the edges of the room if you want to survive. There is treasure at the South-East end of the room, whilst in the North-East end there is another handle to pull. Now go to the North-West corner where there is a door guarded by a Knight. Naturally you must dispose of him before you may use the door. Leave by the room's North exit and proceed along the corridor until you come to a small room on the West side. Enter and operate the mechanism there. Back to the corridor and go to the end. Here there is a Gorgon which takes a bit of getting rid of. Once past her corpse you will find a life-giving fountain so drink until your life points are restored. Go South to a labyrinth and at the end, go South then East until you find another room to the West, which you must enter to operate some more mechanism. Back to the passage and follow it to the end. After a fight with some Guards, activate the trapdoor next to a grille which will open. Walk through and when you arrive at the next crossroads, go North. At the end of this passageway you will find treasure and more mechanism to be operated. Back to the crossroads and go South where you will encounter a Magician. Talk to him - he is friendly (I think). Go back to the corridor and head North. At the end of the passage, put the parrot before the large ear and wait. The passage will open. Carry on walking until you arrive at a room with some lethal calling blocks. Dodge them as you go through the room (easier said than done). In the next room, again work your way around the edges and you will be ready for the last battle. Cast a Psychic Spell and go to the North Door. Shander appears and you now have the chance to kill him. Having done that (ha, ha) work your way back to the harbour and watch the Grand Finale.

THE END

LORDS OF CHAOS played by Damian Steele on a C64

Level 3 - Ragaril's Domain

Teleport spells are required. Flying creatures are a must.

Cast Magic Fire at the wooden floor to create an exit to fly through.

Ghosts can walk through walls to see where opponents are.

Most potion ingredients are outside the walls in the trees.

Carry your cauldron with you.

You won't be able to see flying creatures unless you are in an area that has no roof.

The plain purple discs are the receiving points for teleported creatures. The rings which alternate outwards are the sending points.

Ragaril doesn't leave the room with the sending points - only his minions do.

The best way to kill him is from a flying beast with a Lightning Spell.

MORON played by John Schofield on a Spectrum

Continuing the notes John has written to accompany the full solution.

8. When the Wolves appear, you have 3 turns to DROP MEAT before death.

9. PULL PIN whilst carrying the grenade is sudden death!

10. The Laser in the Port Bay can be fired, but retaliation follows!

11. The green button on the Flight Deck is Self Destruct. The blue button is for the useless lighting.

12. PULL YELLOW lever in the Execution Chamber takes you to the Death Cell. PULL GREEN to go to the Escape Room.

13. At the Swimming Pool, ENTER and SEARCH reveals a Snoozing Shark!

14. Red Herrings - Cheese, Deaf Aid, Pistol, Bucket, Lifeline, Grenade. Plus and Minus Power Packs, Fuel Cell in Cake, Cake.

(next week - scoring)

ORB QUEST played on a 128K Spectrum and Amstrad

There is no way of avoiding capture at the arena. The ring helps you to escape from the cell.

Search the sleeping guard.

SEHCNARB POHC of the tree with axe until it surrenders then EERT POHC.

Read the book for some important information.

To get an amulet - bury the coffin using the shovel.

In the temple, use the acid to release the Barbarian then ask him to move the statue to open an exit eastwards.

Move some drawers to reveal a trapdoor leading to a cellar.

SIMON THE SORCERER played by Jenny Perry on a PC

Trim somebody's beard.

Take a sample of swampling stew; visit him later.

Listen to the owl.

Look carefully in the waterfall location and you'll find a way down to the gorge.

There are 3 exits in the location with the climbing pins.

Pull some bandages somewhere.

The woodworm will chew through floorboards.

Crush some seeds with a stone.

You'll find all you need to make a catapult in one location.

Now what would tempt a mouse into that pouch?

Remember the mirror in Snow White?

The frog is a protective parent.

In the store-room use the key on the door *not* the lock

Wedge the chest open.

SPECIAL OPERATIONS played by Richard Batey on a Spectrum

Always take the Doctor and Sniper on the missions with you.

Search the area around the Compound to find other ways of getting inside.

Never take the dead German's uniform, it is scruffy and will give you away

Make maximum use of cover while shooting it out with German patrols.

Use the Actor and Linguist skills while inside the Complex.

TROUBLE IN BRIDGETON played by Dorothy Millard on a C64

Jo loves clothes and diamonds, but make sure she isn't hungry before you try to take her back.

Speak to the park keeper then to the policeman in order to drain the pond. Make sure Emily is warm before leading her back.

Use the bicycle pump instead of a hammer to obtain a medal for Tony.

A toffee should fix Angela.

In the Bridgeton Arms, enter the cellar before you speak to the landlord. Move the barrel and feel the wall for an exit. Dig in the field to find the way out.

Buy a drink for the farmer who will deal with the bull. Janet needs some reassurance so take her hand. Keith will co-operate when Janet is present.

Light the fireworks outside the pub then quickly enter the back room. Make sure you have the handcuffs ready for George.

Outside the Pet Shop you must be patient. Use the leash to lead Marlin.

SOLUTION OF THE MONTH

SO LITTLE TIME by Damian Steele, available on the C64 and Spectrum
(Based on events during the 1993 Adventurers' Convention).

Start at the entrance to the hotel where the Convention is being held. TAKE [Vulcan] EARS, N (reception), X PERIL (no, she doesn't want the ears!), X BUTTON, PUSH BUTTON (now in lift: ignore the ping pong ball, I understand it is a private joke!), X PANEL, PUSH 2 (now on 2nd floor). E (hotel corridor), X AUTHOR (perhaps you can help him solve the mystery?). E, E (lounge), X LARRY (needs the six different coloured wedges for his Trivial Pursuit), X TABLE (now have pink envelope), OPEN ENVELOPE (you np it open and now have a pink wedge), GIVE PINK WEDGE (he wants them all at the same time).

E (bar), X MANAGER (he is busy putting out cigarettes, a reference to an incident that involved some rather heavy smokers setting of the fire alarm). A thirsty-looking Grue! should wander in, so X GRUE and ORDER (not buy) BEER, TAKE BEER, X BEER (the Grue's favourite). He may have wandered off again, so R(edescribe) until he returns then GIVE BEER (he gives you a piece of cheese), X CHEESE (the yellow edge that you need for Larry), E (dance floor), TAKE DRUM W, W, W, X SIGN, N (middle of conference suite), W (meet Jenny's cat Custard), X CUSTARD, TALK TO CAT (asks a riddle), say FLY (correct, Custard goes away leaving something behind), TAKE ORANGE, PEEL ORANGE (now have an orange wedge), S, W, W, PUSH BUTTON (now in lift), PUSH 6 (as you exit the lift you tear the pocket of your jeans), I (you now have the blue wedge), E (corridor where you meet an A-Level student), X STUDENT (hints it is Gareth Pitchfork), E (he won't let you pass), WEAR EARS, E (he doesn't recognize you). If you are carrying the drum you thp up and drop it, the noise attracting the attention of a woman who throws something at you. TAKE BRICK, X BRICK (the green wedge), X CARPET (find cassette tape), TAKE TAPE, X TAPE (find a credit card), DROP TAPE (I don't like his games either), X CARD, W, W, PUSH BUTTON (now in lift), PUSH G (now at the reception), RING BELL (receptionist appears), BOOK ROOM (need credit card which is immediately reclaimed by Ann Adventurer), X KEY (for room 607), PUSH BUTTON, PUSH 6, E, E (OK if still wearing ears), X DOOR, UNLOCK DOOR (need key from receptionist), TAKE CHOCOLATE (now have brown wedge). That is all six wedges, so return to Larry by going N, W, W, PUSH BUTTON, PUSH 2, E, E, E, GIVE WEDGES (to Larry; as he leaves he drops something), TAKE LIST, X LIST (so *that* is how Larry did it), W, W, GIVE LIST (to author, Martin runs off, leaving behind some Starship Enterprise earnings), TAKE EARRINGS, W, PUSH BUTTON, PUSH G (now in reception), GIVE EARRINGS (to Peril, she gives you a leaflet), X LEAFLET (for Italian restaurant), S, S (pavement outside hotel), HAIL TAXI (now in taxi), SHOW LEAFLET (driver takes you to the restaurant), X TABLE, X MENU, LISTEN, TAKE SHEET (of music), X SHEET (well-known dance tune), OUT, HAIL TAXI (which takes you back to the hotel), N, N, PUSH BUTTON, PUSH 2, E, E (outside Convention suite - see Vicky checking name tags), N (she won't let you in), E, E, E (dance floor), GIVE SHEET. The band plays the tune and Vicky rushes in and starts to dance.

W, W, W, N (just in time to hear Ameter reading the list of awards) 100/100

SERIALIZED SOLUTION

GOLDEN WOMBAT OF DESTINY played by Reynir Stefansson on a PC

It looked like a good idea, but then I didn't expect to have to cross a bletcherous mangrove swamp! Yuck! I took off from my home, south of this swamp some days ago and I've been wading through mud ever since! And it's getting late!

There is supposed to be a city called the Forbidden City around here somewhere. It's said to hold vast riches in diamonds, pearls, gold and who-knows-what, and my idea was to go and have a look-see. With the taxes being what they are, a few extra crowns on the side would come in handy.

There's something strange about the mangrove trees here. For some time now, every doggone last one of them has had the name "Rosalind" scratched deep into their bark. Strange. I'm sure I read somewhere of an Empress called Rosalind. Ah! Of course! It was in Adventure Probe! What a coincidence.

Oh, hey, look! That's the City's North Gate, there..... the *North Gate*?!! Now hold on a cotton-pickin' minute! The City is NORTH of home! I'm on a collision course with the gate, so I must be heading SOUTH! Och, what the heck... the gate was shut and locked, and the tone in the warning sign on the wall wasn't very heart-warming. The city walls were no-go either. They were completely unclimbable. Hmf! That's it, pal! I'm going home! Gonna miss yet another supper anyway.

Back in the swamp I stumbled over something. Another flicking root! It wasn't. It was a huge iron ring, barely visible in the mud. Iron rings like these are normally pulled to open a door. I pulled it. I pulled it hard. I pulled it as hard as I could. Suddenly it gave and I fell backwards into the mud. The ring and the trapdoor it was attached to followed. I don't know what it is about caves and open trapdoors that suckers us into going in, but in I went anyway. It was darker than a locked cellar in the middle of the night, but I could sense I was nearing the city. This was getting interesting.

I finally came to a halt just under a manhole, through which I could see the sky. It took me only a few tenths of a second to register I was inside the Forbidden City. It looked all nice enough with all that jade-green, but so mindbogglingly empty of life. Could those plague stories be true? Just about that time the sun set. As its last rays disappeared, a humming noise broke out and ice-blue lights turned on. Blech! Streetlighting is all very well, but why use mercury-vapour lamps, when the orange sodium light is so much better?

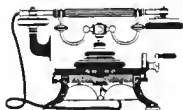
I turned eastward, into an alley. I saw a human skull there and bent down to pick it up. OW! He bit me! No, not the skull, but an ant in the crack beside it! Curses(3)! OK, buster, keep it, then! Then I noted the flap. What was it for? What was behind it? I pulled on it. It wouldn't budge. It didn't feel stuck, though. It was more like something was pulling harder than I could. I gave up on this and went further down the alley and round a bend.

This was the second sign of life I saw: A snoring wombat. The "Adventurer's Guide To The Earth's Fauna" says wombats are nocturnal, yet this one was still fast asleep.

I shouted loudly. Brr! The echoes gave me the creeps! But at least the wombat woke up. It didn't run away as I expected, but kept close to me. How very odd, I thought and went back the same way I came. The wombat followed. Being this close to the gate, I decided to follow a wide southbound avenue and see where it would end. (continued next month)

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